THE RHETORIC OF GENDER TERMS

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FRANCESCA SANTORO L'HOIR

THE RHETORIC OF GENDER TERMS

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'MAN', 'WOMAN', AND THE PORTRAYAL OF CHARACTER IN LATIN PROSE

BY

FRANCESCA SANTORO L'HOIR

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LIBERIS MEIS
ALWYN, PAUL, ROBIN, EMILE, AARON L' HOIR
ET MEMORIAE PATRIS CARISSIMI
AL SANTORO
VIRI IN SCRIBENDO PERITISSIMI

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ix
Introduction 1

PART ONE
THE CICERONIAN TRADITION AND ROMAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

1. Cicero's masculine terminology and rhetorical convention . . . 9
2. The obscene *mulier* and the not-heard *femina*: Cicero's feminine terminology and comic prototypes 29
3. Sallust: factional politics through the looking-glass 47
4. *Ab Urbe Condita*: when *viri* were *VIRI* 63
5. Livian ladies: cardboard characters in feminine attire 77
6. Velleius Paterculus: *historicus patrioticus* 100
7. Tacitus: the tradition and its breaking 120

PART TWO
THE LETTER, THE BIOGRAPHY, AND THE NOVEL

8. C. Plinius Secundus: man of letters 147
9. Suetonius: Ciceronian shorthand 163
10. Petronius and Apuleius: the good; the bad; and the *nequissimi* 172

Conclusion 197
Bibliography 205
Index 209

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INTRODUCTION

The words for "man" and "woman" in Latin are charged with significance. Unlike their lacklustre English equivalents, which need adjectives to give them character, the individual Latin terms themselves hold a variety of specific connotations. The Latin language, in fact, is "twice-blessed" as far as words denoting the sexes are concerned, for it has not only *homo* and *mulier*, but also *vir* and *femina*.[1] Their respective connotations must be taken into account, especially in Latin prose where the nouns are used either on their own or, more commonly, as components of epithets. Gender terms served as rhetorical ornaments of emphasis[2] that were often employed as constituents of recurrent *topoi* and used as devices of *insinuatio* in order to delineate character. Latin gender epithets embellish the oratory of Cicero and the historical narratives of Sallust and Livy. They encumber the prose of Velleius and season the letters of Pliny with a synthetic Ciceronian flavour. They infuse the character sketches of the novelists Petronius and Apuleius with primary pigments. Used as pedestrian appellatives in the biographies of Suetonius and in the early works of Tacitus, they become subtle expressions of the historian's innuendo in the *Annales*.

Of the gender expressions to be explored here, *homo* and *mulier* do double duty, being both the general terms and the biological words for man and woman. Perhaps because Roman society was divided into classes, a second set of terms evolved to distinguish the elite from the ordinary.[3] The nouns *vir* and *femina* came to signify the upper classes,

[1] I. Opelt, *Die lateinischen Schimpfwörter und verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen: eine Typologie (Heidelberg, 1965) 265; Homo* has Oscan and Umbrian forms (*humuns* and *homonus*, respectively) and is related to an Indo-European word meaning "earth". *Homo*, furthermore, originally signified both man and woman in Latin, and is equated with the Greek word, *anthropos*. *Mulier* is noted to be a word of unknown origin, which corresponds to the Greek word, *gyne*. Ernout, A., Meillet, A., *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine: histoire des mots* (Paris, 1939) s.v. *homo*; *mulier*.

[2] Quintilian considered epithets to be effective ornaments for stressing a particular point (*Inst. Orat.* 8.6.40).

[3] The moral overtones of the masculine term are cited by J. Hellegouarc'h who notes Cicero's definition: *appellata est enim ex viro virtus* (*Tusc.* 2.43); he furthermore specifies *virtus* as the salient attribute of the Roman nobility: *Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la république* (Paris, 1963) 244. T.E. Kinsey, likewise, cites Cicero's use of *vir* "to attribute excellence in character, especially to men of high rank", *M. Tulli Ciceronis Pro P. Quinctio Oratio*, ed., text, and intro., T.E. Kinsey (Sydney, 1971) 114; and J.N. Adams makes similar observations about *femina*, equating it with "lady" in the British sense of the word, and noting it to be a term of esteem that is indicative of "moral or social distinction." Adams, "Latin words for "woman" and "wife"," *Glotta* (1972) 234.

while *homo* and *mulier* applied to everyone else.[4] *Vir* and *femina* are never neutral; for while every man, by definition, is a *homo*, and every woman, a *mulier*, not every man or woman is a *vir* or a *femina*, respectively. *Vir* and *femina*, however, are not to be confounded with the English words, "gentleman" and "lady", for they connote more than social status alone and relate to a specific oligarchic ethic. Since aristocratic life centered upon loyalty and service to the Republic, *vir* and *femina* became identified with its virtues, especially patriotism, frugality, generosity, and defense of the Senate and the conservative State religion. The nouns, therefore, could be, and were, employed as terms of praise. Conversely, *homo* and *mulier*, because of their use to indicate members of the lower orders, including slaves and freedmen, many of whom were foreigners, came to connote foreign vices, avariciousness, luxury, association with the mob, conspiracy, or participation in an innovative peregrine cult. Consequently, *homo* and *mulier* can represent the antithesis to the oligarchic ideal. Used as terms of abuse, they figure prominently in invective against members of the aristocracy.

The positive connotations of *vir* and *femina* and the negative of *homo* and *mulier* are indicated by the fact that the former pair are persistently coupled with complimentary adjectives that, with few exceptions, are never applied to the latter; and the latter pair are repeatedly matched to pejorative modifiers that are virtually never employed with the former.[5] Used in the courtroom or political arena by the orator, the epithets often functioned as components of innuendo; they were ideal providers of "corroborative detail," to borrow the words of a Victorian librettist, that lent "artistic verisimilitude" to what might be "an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative."[6] Since oratory was a fundamental component of Roman education, rhetorical training is reflected in the writings of Latin authors.[7] It will be shown in this study that gender epithets

[4] While Latin has separate terms for men and women, Greek distinguishes only between *aner* and *anthropos*. The designation for woman is confined to *gyne*, and sometimes *anthropos* with a feminine definite article. There is no counterpart to the noun, *femina*, as an indicator of status, the adjective, *thelus*, being more akin to the poetic *femineus*, which plays no significant part in Latin prose. *Thelus* might be equated to the neutral substantive *femina*, as in *bos femina*, which is usually juxtaposed to *mas*. The lack of a separate noun for woman in Greek may well reflect upon the relative positions of women within the aristocracies of both societies.

[5] *v. infra*, chapters one and two.

[6] W.S. Gilbert, *The Mikado*.

[7] G. Kennedy notes that Roman boys of the provinces studied in their hometowns and then, if their fathers could afford it, they were sent to Rome to study rhetoric. *Quintilian* (N.Y., 1969) 16; P.G. Walsh writes that Livy was very probably educated in Patavium, and that there is evidence that he had a "keen interest" in rhetoric. *Livy, his Historic Aims and*

numbered among the rhetorical strategies that were deployed to sway opinion, either positively or negatively. Because gender epithets were governed by determinate rhetorical standards, they remained fairly static in their usage. When employed as components of rhetorical *topoi*, the terms both coloured and also distorted the portrayals of the men and women of Roman history. An understanding of the respective connotations of the terms reveals the bias of the author—an important factor in historical analysis—and even affects the interpretation of significant events. Awareness of their nuances, furthermore, sheds light on the behaviour of men and women, not necessarily as it was in reality, but as it was perceived and presented in literature according to fixed aristocratic standards of good and bad.

This study is confined to Latin prose since it rather than poetry purports to present accurate representations of historical personages. The investigation might be called a rhetorical odyssey, for it traces *homo*, *mulier*, *vir*, and *femina* in their contexts through the 250 years most representative of classical Latin prose: the last decades of the Roman Republic and the first two centuries of the Roman Empire.

The study is divided into two sections. The first deals with Ciceronian oratory and demonstrates the extent to which Cicero's usage is reflected in Roman historiography. The second treats other forms of prose, namely, the letter, the biography, and the novel.[8]

Previous scholarship has centered upon lexicology. No attempt has been made to investigate masculine and feminine terminology in context of recurrent rhetorical *topoi* or to consider the broader implication: how oratory crystallized the perceptions of Roman men and women according to narrow oligarchic concepts.

Methods (Cambridge, 1961-76) 40; R. Martin mentions that Tacitus made his reputation in oratory, *Tacitus* (London, 1981) 29; A.J. Woodman, writing of Velleius Paterculus, maintains that all Roman historians worked in an idiom that was based upon oratory, and that it is therefore necessary to "de-rhetorize" their narrative in order to try to understand "how things actually happened." He further writes that there is no use forming a theory of history when one is dealing with a "literary *topos*," and notes that the proposition applies to "all ancient historians without exception!" *Velleius Paterculus, the Tiberian Narrative (2.94-131)*, ed. and intro., A.J. Woodman (Cambridge, 1977) 35-36.

[8] Several authors have been omitted because they do not customarily employ gender terms as epithets. For instance, historical personages play a minor part in the natural histories of Pliny the Elder. When he does mention them, he does not use gender epithets to colour their characterisations. Quintilian, Seneca the Elder, and Seneca the Younger have, similarly, been confined to footnotes, because there is not enough material to justify an entire chapter. Furthermore, Seneca's employment of *femina* in the letters to Marcia and Helvia is similar to that of Pliny the Younger, who uses gender epithets liberally in his letters. Velleius Paterculus has also been preferred to Valerius Maximus, whose usage is repetitious.

This investigation derived from several pages of B. Axelson's *Unpoetische Wörter*, which offers several hypotheses about *mulier* and *femina*: first of all, that the former was used more frequently in the prose of the Republic than the latter.[9] Axelson then notes an increased preference for *femina* over *mulier* in the Empire, and postulates that *femina* was popularized by the poets and consequently became the preferred word to designate women in prose.[10] Axelson concludes his observations by commenting that *mulier*, for reasons not made apparent, predominates over *femina* during the late Empire.

Sheer statistics based upon the various *indices verborum*, taken at face value, would seem to corroborate Axelson's theories. Such figures, however, are misleading; and Axelson's hypothesis is erroneous, for it implies a haphazard use of the terms, based upon fashion or popularity. In reality, *mulier* and *femina*, like *homo* and *vir*, had specific connotations, based partly upon class and partly upon rhetorical convention. The selection of gender terms may well have been unconscious, but even unconscious usage may be based upon learned patterns of culture. Moreover, in many cases, it can be demonstrated that the choice was deliberate.

Although this study began as an inquiry into feminine terminology, it soon became clear that masculine parallels were essential to the understanding of the subject, not only because there are so many more references to men than there are to women in Latin prose, but also because the rhetorical conventions governing the masculine terms are analogous to those dictating the feminine.[11] The study of gender terminology would have been impossible some years ago; but now the project has been made manageable by the advent of computerized *indices verborum* of the Latin prose authors. Previous scholarship consists of five pages of Axelson's monograph on unpoetic words in which he suggests that an in-depth study of feminine terms be undertaken;[12] the occasional note in critical editions of classical texts;[13] and an article on

[9] B. Axelson, *Unpoetische Wörter: ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der lateinischen Dichtersprache* (Lund, 1945) 53-55.

[10] Axelson's proposition is rejected by J.N. Adams (*supra*, n. 3) 239, n. 48.

[11] Grateful acknowledgment is made to Nicholas Horsfall who encouraged my initial efforts and suggested that an investigation of the masculine terms might be fruitful.

[12] Axelson (*supra*, n. 9) 55.

[13] e.g., Nisbet: "the stylistic possibilities of *homo* are never negligible." *M. Tulli Ciceronis de Domo sua ad Pontifices Oratio*, R.G.M. Nisbet, ed. (Oxford, 1938) 79; cf. Kinsey (*supra* n. 3) *loc. cit.* J.S. Reid writes that Cicero sometimes uses both words in the same sentence to distinguish between characters: *M. Tulli Ciceronis de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum, Libri I & II*, edited by J.S. Reid (Cambridge, 1925) 222; other citations in *M. Tulli*

terms for "woman" and "wife" by J.N. Adams, which treats sixteen centuries of usage in an almost equal number of pages.[14] H.D. Jocelyn has commented upon the use of *homo* in the comedies, and others have dealt with the adjective *muliebris*, but only as it relates to isolated cases.[15] The rhetorical background of such terms has merited little notice; nor has any attempt been made to analyse how writers of prose—particularly historians—adhered to rhetorical conventions in employing gender terms. It is hoped that the study will not only demonstrate that gender terms had specific nuances that should not be ignored, but that the investigation will also contribute further to what has been termed the "de-rhetorization" of Roman history.[16]

Ciceronis pro M. Caelio Oratio, ed., R.G. Austin (Oxford, 1952) 89, 162; *M. Tulli Ciceronis in L. Calpurnium Pisonem Oratio*, ed., R.G.M. Nisbet (Oxford, 1961) 116; *M. Tulli Ciceronis pro T. Annio Milone ad iudices Oratio*, ed., A.C. Clark (Oxford, 1895) 16; H.C. Gotoff, *An Analysis of the Pro Archia* (Urbana, 1979) 157.

[14] Adams (*supra*, n. 3) 234-251.

[15] H.D. Jocelyn, "*Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto*," *Antichthon* 6 (1972) 34; R. Heurgon, *REL* 38 (1960) 34-38; On *muliebris* in Tacitus, L.W. Rutland, *CW* (1978) 15-18.

[16] Woodman (*supra*, n. 7) *loc. cit.*

PART ONE

THE CICERONIAN TRADITION AND ROMAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER ONE

CICERO'S MASCULINE TERMINOLOGY AND RHETORICAL CONVENTION

Although the fact may have gone unnoticed in the barrage of Ciceronian verbiage, the orator observed certain conventions in his speeches when designating a man specifically by gender. While occasionally he might use both *homo* and *vir* in the same paragraph to indicate a particular individual for clarity or emphasis, most often he applied the respective terms to definite categories of persons, a phenomenon especially evident in his use of epithets. To put the matter succinctly, there seem to have been fixed oratorical standards to which Cicero adhered in separating the *viri* from the *homines*. The former group includes celebrated men of senatorial rank, upper magistrates, notable *equites*, persons who participate in public life and are politically sound (i.e., the *boni*), those who have distinguished themselves in their country's service either in the military or in the provinces, and those whom Cicero wishes to flatter. *Homo*, on the other hand, embraces *privati* who have not chosen a senatorial career (e.g., scholars and lawyers), the lower magistrates (particularly tribunes), members of the lower classes, municipals, foreigners (including their aristocracy—with notable exceptions), freedmen, slaves, and any male member of the upper classes whom Cicero wishes to insult.

It should be emphasized that *vir* and *homo* are words that are totally redundant to the Latin language, since sexual distinctions can be expressed by substantives, demonstrative and relative pronouns. They are often used as appositive epithets. Therefore, when Cicero specifies Gn. Pompeius a *vir clarissimus*, or M. Antonius a *homo nequissimus*, he is employing the expressions as epithets for emphasis.[1] *Vir* and *homo* are components of Ciceronian hyperbole, which I. Opelt characterizes as the intensification of the noun by use of accompanying adjectives.[2] She

[1] *M. Tulli Ciceronis Pro P. Quinctio Oratio*, ed. with text, intro. and commentary by T.E. Kinsey (Sydney, 1971) 114. Kinsey notes that the additional noun allows Cicero to add weight to the epithet. J.M. May writes that epithets represent the externalization of Ciceronian ethos, *Trials of Character: the Eloquence of Ciceronian Ethos*, (Chapel Hill, 1988) 130.

[2] I. Opelt, *Die Lateinischen Schimpfwörter mit verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen: eine Typologie* (Heidelberg, 1965) 261.

furthermore sees *vir* and *homo* to be neutral words rendered pejorative by negative adjectives.[3] To this assertion, issue must be taken, since *vir*, although it may be used sarcastically,[4] is always coupled with positive adjectives. When used by itself, it therefore retains its positive associations. Moreover, the repetition of *homo* in pejorative contexts is likely to lend negative nuances to that word.

Consultation of the Ciceronian *indices verborum* demonstrates that there are certain positive adjectives, such as *bonus* and *primarius*, always used with *vir*, and a multitude of negative ones, only employed with *homo*.[5] Context is essential, for what may at face value appear a positive adjective may be part of a well-calculated insult. *Insignis*, *religiosus* and *sobrius* are examples. Used only with *homo*, they are never complimentary. In the first example, the *homo* in question is *insignis* in turpitude (*Rab. Perd.* 24). *Religiosus* is a label with which Cicero tags Verres, Clodius and Piso precisely to emphasize their sacrilegious proclivities,[6] and *sobrius* refers to Antony, whom Cicero characterizes as ***homo numquam** sobrius* (*Phil.* 2.81). Otherwise there is no mistaking the pejorative nature of the adjectives which are utilized only in tandem with *homo* and never with *vir*. The list is a long one:

> acerbus, amens, avarus, audax, crudelis, callidus, damnatus, facinerosus, ferus, frugalis, furibundus, furiosus, immoderatus, importunus, improbus, impudicus, impudens, impurus, ingratus, inimicus, insanus, iratus, levis, libertinus, libidinosus, litigiosus, luxuriosus, nefarius, nequam, pecuniosus, profligatus, ridiculus, saucius, sceleratus, seditiosus, sordidus, stultus, symphoniacus, temerarius, timidus, turbulentus, vesanus, vehemens, violentus.

This catalogue of hominous attributes has been dredged out of Cicero's inexhaustible reservoir of political invective.[7]

Of the positive adjectives, Cicero uses *bonus* (or its superlative form) with *vir* nearly 200 times,[8] but *homo* only twice, both references being

[3] *Ibid.* 264.

[4] e.g., Antony: *vir bonus et republica dignus* (*Phil.* 2.56); Sex. Naevius: *iste vir optimus* (*Quinct.* 19).

[5] Not necessarily pejorative: *necessarius* (*v. infra, p.* 16); and *novus* (*infra*, p. 11); *verecundus* is used twice with *homo* in speeches: a hypothetical *verecundus homo* (*Caecin.* 72), and in a sarcastic allusion to Antony: *homo verecundus in Macedoniam non accedit* (*Phil.* 10.13).

[6] *Verr.* 5.49; *Dom.* 105; *Pis.* 28.

[7] The superlative forms of the adjective are also implied.

[8] H. Merguet, *Lexikon zu den Reden des Cicero, mit angabe sämtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1877) s.v. *bonus*.

to *boni homines* in general, rather than to particular men.[9] The concerns of *boni, optimi* (and *summi*) *viri* are closely allied with those of Cicero and his political *amici*. The political significance of *bonus* and *bonus vir* has long been recognized.[10] It must be emphasized, however, that not only *bonus* but also *vir* belongs to the vocabulary of political praise, just as *homo* will be shown to pertain to the lexicon of factional abuse.[11]

Public life seems to have been one criterion of the *bonus vir*. *Boni viri* are equated to *boni cives* (*Vat.* 40); they often serve on juries[12] (*Mil.* 21) and are tireless in their opposition to scoundrels such as Catiline (*Cat.* 2.19) and Antony (*Phil.* 1.30). Men who do not participate in public life are termed *privati* (*Imp. Pomp.* 62), and *privatus* is almost always accompanied by *homo*.[13] *Privatus homo* is a neutral term which assumes shades of colour according to circumstances. For instance, Verres as a *privatus homo* entertained pirates in his villa, the implication being that he did so in his off-hours (*Verr.* 1.12). A *privatus homo*, on the other hand, may be a loyal Roman citizen (*Verr.* 2.163). The term in itself, therefore, has no pejorative associations. Nevertheless, it is significant that *vir* implies active participation in public affairs, and that *homo* connotes passivity. Likewise, it is meaningful that a man who has not achieved the consulship or whose ancestors have never attained one of the magistracies should be a *novus homo*.[14] He has yet to prove himself; furthermore, *homo* is a reminder of low status, which helps keep the *novus* in his proper place. *Novus* and *vir* are mutually exclusive. Since participation in politics and serving *res publica* rank among the highest aims in Cicero's life, it follows that such pursuits be reserved for the nation's *viri*.

Primarius is another adjective used exclusively with *vir*. Cicero utilizes it particularly in the second *actio* of the *Verrine Orations* to

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[9] Both are in his philosophical works: *homines optimi non intelligunt totam rationem everti* (*Fin.* 1.51); *opulentos homines et copiosos...esse bonos* (*C.* 26).

[10] G. Achard, "L'emploi de *boni, boni viri, boni cives* et de leurs formes superlatives dans l'action politique de Cicéron," *LEC* 41 (1973) 207-221; W.K. Lacey, "*Boni atque improbi*," *G&R*, Ser. 2, 17 (1971) 3-16.

[11] *v. infra*, pp. 21-28.

[12] *Iuratorum hominum* (*Verr. A. Pr.* 40): members of the jury; *homo* may refer to judges and attorneys (e.g. L. Balbus, *iudex, homo...peritissimus*, (*Verr.* 2.31) and not be pejorative, but when Cicero compliments a judge, juror or witness, he terms him *vir*: e.g., P. Servilius Isauricus, *vir clarissimus maximus rebus gestis* (*Verr.* 1.56).

[13] *Privatus homo*: *Leg. Agr.* 2.97; *Verr.* 1.12; 2.163; 4.71; 5.77; *Caecin.* 41; *Dom.* 43; 91; *Pis.* 30. Used with *vir*: *Balb.* 25; *clarissimus vir*: *Phil.* 11.25.

[14] J. Hellegouarc'h, "Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la république," (Paris, 1963) 142-3. *Homo* is used exclusively with *adulescens*. Merguet (*supra*, n. 8) s.v. *adulescens*.

indicate witnesses for the prosecution, members of the senatorial or equestrian orders who are labouring tirelessly to convict the corrupt ex-governor.[15] In his non-political speeches, *vir* is equivalent to "my worthy opponent." This is demonstrated in *Pro Quinctio*, where Sex. Naevius, Cicero's adversary, is a *vir bonus* or a *vir optimus* (11; 16; 19) until the orator finishes playing cat-and-mouse and blasts him as *iste homo acerrimus, bonorum possessor, expulsor, ereptor* (*Quinct.* 30).[16] Cicero's use of *vir* with positive modifiers reflects the insincerity inherent in judiciary procedure.[17] Sincerity, however, was not a criterion for Roman public life where flattery and sycophancy often meant the difference between success or failure. It will be demonstrated that *vir* was an essential component written into the script of the Roman political scenario.

The Roman Political Vir

The beacon lights of the Roman State—the *lumina rei publicae*—according to Cicero, are its *praestantissimi viri*. He further defines them as *consulares, praetorii*, and *honestissimi senatores*, as well as the *flos nobilitatis ac iuventutis* (*Phil.* 2.37). Cicero's speeches are studded with references to *viri consulares*: e.g., P. Crassus, *vir amplissimus* (*Balb.* 50); Q. Metellus Pius, *vir sanctissimus et summa religione ac modestia* (*Ibid.*); M. Crassus, *vir clarissimus* (*Cael.* 18); Q. Hortensius, *clarissimus vir atque eloquentissimus* (*Sest.* 3); L. Calpurnius Bibulus, *vir singulari virtute, constantia, gravitate praeditus* (*Dom.* 39), and a host of others too numerous to mention.[18] Not surprisingly, Pompey is the *praestantissimus omnium vir*, whose praises Cicero proclaims endlessly. The intrepid *imperator* is variously characterized as *ille vir* (*Pis.* 27), *summus vir* (*Ib.* 28), *eo robore vir* (*Att.* 6.6.4), *sapientissimus et iustissimus vir* (*Mil.* 2), *prastantissima virtute vir* (*Ib.* 66), *vir unus omnium fortissimus* (*Har.*

[15] L. Flavius, *Verr.* 1.14; M. Marcellus, 1.135; Senators, 2.102; 149; L. Vibius, *eq. Rom.* 2.182; anonymous witnesses, 1.157; 2.20; 81; 189; 3.18. 122. *Equites Romani*, 3.136; C. Gallus, *vir primarius*, senator (also *homo vestri ordinis* for variation), 3.152; Cornelius Sisenna, *vir primarius*, has a houseful *hominum honestissimorum*, 4.33; *homines nobiles*: Segestans: L. Papinius, 4.46; Onasus, 5. 120.

[16] May notes the irony behind *vir optimus* (*supra*, n. 1) 15; Cicero uses irony on the prosecution and its witnesses, calling them *viri lectissimi civitatis* (*Quinct.* 5). *Amplus, clarus, fortis*, and *praestans*, while they may be used with *homo*, appear more frequently with *vir*. Context is important: e.g. Vatinius ran for aedile *cum bonis viris et hominibus primis* who were *non praestantissimis opibus* (*Sest.* 114).

[17] Designation of colleagues as *clarissimi* or *praestantissimi viri* recalls speeches in today's political conventions which laud "that Great Senator from the Great State of..."

[18] Merguet (*supra*, n. 8) s.v. *vir*.

Resp. 49), and *summus vir atque omnium princeps* (*Phil.* 11.18), to name but a few of his sterling epithets. After his death Cicero enrolls him among the gods as *ille singularis vir ac paene divinus* (*Phil.* 2.39). Even during Pompey's lifetime Cicero gushes in fulsome panegyric as when, upon return from exile, he hails the *imperator* as *Gn. Pompeius, vir omnium qui sunt, fuerunt, erunt, virtute, sapientia, gloria princeps!* (*Red. Quir.* 16). Cicero's speeches make it evident that *vir* is a term of utmost respect which he applies to Rome's foremost senators and magistrates. That the word is not to be thrown about at random is evident from a letter to Atticus about the late dictator in which Cicero bristles that he heard "that tyrant" called *clarissimum virum* in a public meeting (*Att.* 15.20.2). To Cicero, a man who has misused his power is unworthy of the time-honoured epithet.

A *vir* is courageous, and Cicero constantly admonishes acquaintances to remember that they are *viri.*[19] Particularly significant are his words to P. Sittius, a Roman knight from Nuceria, *te ut hortarer rogaremque, ut et hominem te et virum esse meminisses* (*Fam.* 5.17.3). Cicero writes that if Sittius follows his advice, he will bear up under the calamities which have been allotted to so many *fortissimis atque optimis viris* in the Republic's uncertain times. This passage demonstrates that there are essential qualities which distinguish the *vir* from the ordinary *homo* or human being. One of these is *fortitudo*, an attribute closely allied with *virtus.*[20] Rome's leaders who have displayed prowess in the field of battle are designated *fortissimi viri*. Among these are Marius (*Pis.* 20), Pompey (*Verr. A. Pr.* 44; 5.153), and Caesar (*Mil.* 66);[21] or L. Sulla and L. Murena

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[19] e.g. *Att.* 10.7.2; Cicero reads a letter to the Senate, in which Lentulus urges Catiline to take heart: *cura ut vir sis!* (*Cat.* 3.12); *infra*, chapter three, p. 58.

[20] Hellegouarc'h (*supra*, n. 14) 247.

[21] One of the few times Caesar is designated by gender epithet. As victim of Clodius: *clarissimus et fortissimus vir* emphasizes Caesar's respectability (*Mil.* 66). Cicero dismisses Caesar as *homo mitissimus atque lenissimus* because he refused to vote for the death penalty (*Cat.* 4.10). G. Caesar's epithet anticipates that of L. Caesar, a *vir fortissimus et amantissimus rei publicae* who has voted for capital punishment (*Ib.* 4.13), cf. *Sest.* 132: *mitem hominem et a caede abhorrentem*. When Cicero dissociates Vatinius from Caesar, the latter is a *clementissimus atque optimus vir*, *Vat* 22. In Cicero's letters, Caesar is usually a *homo*: to Caecina: *h. acutus* (*Fam.* 6.6.9); to Trebatius: *liberalissimus...homo meique amantissimus* (*Ib.* 7.10.3); but also a *vir* whom Trebatius must not let slip through his fingers (*Ib.* 7.17.2); and a *clarissimus ac liberalissimus vir* (*Ib.* 7.17.3); to Terentia: *h. amens* (*Ib.* 14.14.1); to Atticus: *homine audacissimo paratissimoque* (*Att.* 7.3.5). Caesar is a *fortissimus vir* in the reported speech of Clodius (*Dom.* 39). The dearth of *vir* with flattering adjectives is particularly interesting in the speeches after the civil war when Cicero praises the dictator. Cicero's respect for Caesar as a great orator (Suet. *Jul.* 55.1) may have prevented him from using such transparent tactics, especially since they both studied rhetoric with the same teacher (Plut. *Cic.* 4.5; *Caes.* 3.1). Cicero probably realized that the dictator would be unimpressed by *vir*-plus-superlatives.

who triumphed over Mithridates (*Imp. Pomp.* 8). In Cicero's correspondence, *fortissimus* indicates *imperatores* in their provinces[22] and valiant Romans who have fallen in battle (*Fam.* 4.8.1).

Fortissimus vir with its martial overtones[23] sometimes implies willingness to die for the Republic. For instance, when Cicero is trying to convince the people of a clear and present danger to the State, he assures them that he has rallied *fortissimos atque amantissimos rei publicae viros* to combat it (*Cat.* 3.5); such are L. Flaccus and Gn. Pomptinus, who meet the Allobrogians at the Milvian bridge at the height of the Catilinarian conspiracy (cf. *Prov. Cons.* 32).[24] *Fortissimi viri* abound in the Catilinarian speeches,[25] demonstrating the extent to which Cicero was likely exaggerating the danger in an effort to justify his actions in executing the conspirators.[26] He implies that *fortissimi viri* put their country first and are not afraid to espouse unpopular policies; nor do they back down when danger threatens. L. Caesar is an example: a *vir fortissimus et amantissimus rei publicae*, he argues for the death of the conspirators even though one of them is his brother-in-law (*Cat.* 4.13). Cato, who supported Cicero on the issue, earns the orator's imperishable gratitude as a *vir fortissimus:*

> Quem virum! Sanctissimum, prudentissimum, fortissimum, amicissimum rei publicae, virtute, consilio, ratione vitae mirabili ad laudem et prope singulari! (*Dom.* 21; cf. *Mil.* 16).

The *fortissimus vir* as tyrannicide is a theme upon which Cicero relentlessly harps. The orator maintains that *viri fortes* know the glory of killing a tyrant (*Phil.* 2.117), and he further defines a *vir* as anyone who will dare rid the State of its pernicious elements in the face of death (*Mil.* 82). Among Cicero's favourite tyrannicides are the *viri fortissimi*, D. Iunius Brutus (*Phil.* 11.22; 14.3), P. Scipio Nasica (*Dom.* 91; *Mil.* 83; *Cat.* 1.3), and T. Annius Milo, who dispatched the orator's enemy, P.

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[22] e.g., T. Ampius Balbus, proconsul of Cilicia: *Fam.* 6.12.4; *imperatores* in Syria, *viri fortes optimique cives*: *Fam.* 12.11.1.

[23] Nisbet equates it with "our gallant fighting men." *M. Tulli Ciceronis in L. Calpurnium Pisonem*, R.G. M. Nisbet, ed. (Oxford, 1961) 116.

[24] *v. infra*, chapter three, 56.

[25] Marcellus: *Cat.* 1.21; respectable citizens preyed upon by Catiline: 2.10; Sulla's colonists, *fortissimi viri* until luxury went to their heads: 2.20. Flaccus and Pomptinus: 3.5; G. Antonius: 3.14; L. Caesar: 4.13; *tribuni aerari* who defend the State (4.15). May notes that Cicero characterizes the conspiracy as a war, with himself as a general on a par with Pompey (*supra*, n. 1) 54-8.

[26] Nisbet argues that the speeches were written and published three years after delivery when Cicero's actions were questioned: "The Speeches," in *Studies in Latin Literature and its Influences: Cicero*, ed. T.A. Dorey (London, 1965) 62; cf. W.C. McDermott, "Cicero's publication of his consular orations," *Philologus* 116 (1962) 283.

Clodius.[27] Cicero enshrines Milo in the tyrant killer's hall of fame, noting that the *vir fortis* is in the same league with others who have seen to it that the State came to no harm, namely Ahala, Nasica, Opimius,[28] Marius, and Cicero himself (*Mil.* 82). The orator urges all brave *viri* to come to the aid of their Republic: *Vos, vos, appello, fortissimi viri, qui multum pro re publica sanguinem effudistis! (Mil. 101).* Even a woman, he continues, were she not afraid of danger, would kill a public enemy, but he who will do so on behalf of the State, despite envy and in defiance of certain death, is a real *vir* (*Mil.* 82).[29]

E.S. Gruen has noted that the "interests of state" in the orator's mind usually meant the "interests of Cicero".[30] His use of *vir* reflects this. For instance, he calls P. Servilius Isauricus *vir cum clarissimus tum vero optimus mihique amicissimus* (*Red. Sen.* 25) and *vir clarissimus et cum in universam rem publicam, tum etiam erga meam salutem fide ac benevolentia singulari* (*Prov. Cons.* 1). Self-interest also becomes apparent in Cicero's treatment of L. Ninnius Quadratus, an otherwise obscure tribune of the plebs. As will be shown below, tribunes usually rate the term *homo*.[31] Ninnius, however, is promoted to *vir fortissimus atque optimus* (*Dom.* 125; cf. *Sen.* 3) and *vir incredibile fide, magnitudine animi, constantia* (*Sest.* 26). Similar treatment is bestowed upon Ninnius' colleague, M. Cispius, *virum optimum et constantissimum* (*Sest.* 76). The reasons behind the verbal kudos are not difficult to discover: both tribunes voted for Cicero's recall. Likewise did P. Sestius and Q. Fabricius, whom he terms respectively *civis egregius et vir fortissimus*, and *vir optimus* (*Mil.* 38). Many others owe their "virhood" to doing favours for Cicero. Among them are L. Gellius, *vir clarissimus,* who urged that Cicero be voted a civic crown (*Pis.* 6); M. Laenius Flaccus and sons, who offered Cicero hospitality despite an *aquae et ignis interdictio* (*Sest.* 131); and the reader is left to wonder about the identity of the anonymous *vir* who, *summa auctoritate* and *eloquentia*, equated Cicero's downfall with the funeral of the Roman Republic (*Prov. Cons.* 45).

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[27] *Mil.* 63; 81; 82; 84; 89.

[28] *v. infra*, chapter three, 49.

[29] Quae mulier sceleratum ac perniciosum civem interficere non auderet, si periculum non timeret? Proposita invidia, morte, poena, qui nihilo segnius rem publicam defendit, is vir vere putandus est!

[30] E.S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley, 1974) 503.

[31] *v. infra*, pp. 21-22.

The Humble Status of Homo

The world of the Roman stage, according to H.D. Jocelyn, was fundamentally divided between gods and men (*di* and *homines*). To identify a *homo* with a *deus*, he continues, was ludicrous in the extreme.[32] The polarity between *di* and *homines* was not limited to the theatrical world, and the expression *di hominesque* (in that order) persists throughout Roman literature.[33] In the Roman hierarchical structure, the gods are at the top, and the *homines* are at the bottom.[34] Jocelyn notes that whenever a woman in Roman comedy addresses her husband in a respectful manner, he is *mi vir*; however, whenever she accosts him shrewishly, he is *mi homo*.[35] He likewise observes that *homo* is used for males for whom it is unnecessary to be deferential, including members of the lower classes and slaves;[36] he cites the use of *homo* by men who are "tolerantly contemptuous" of each other's behaviour, and comments that the tone of *homo* in comedy "remains low and negative."[37]

Cicero similarly employs *homo* to indicate low rank.[38] We hear of impoverished *agrestes homines* (*Cat.* 2.20), *servi homines*,[39] and *libertini homines*.[40] *Homo* in such contexts need not be pejorative (but often is); it is merely the appropriate designation for the lower classes. For instance, the *libertus* L. Cossinius Anchialus is a *homo et patrono et patroni necessariis*[41]...*probatissimus* (*Fam.* 13.23.1);[42] the *libertus* Phania, *homo non modo prudens, verum etiam...curiosus* (*Fam.* 3.1.1); but the

[32] H.D. Jocelyn, "*Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto* (Ter. *Heauton Timorumenos* 77)," *Antichthon* 6 (1972) 33.

[33] Especially in Cicero, Livy, Suetonius and Tacitus. See *indices verborum* cited below, passim.

[34] There is only one class lower, the *bestiae*. Jocelyn notes "beast" to be a common term of invective (*supra*, n. 32) 34.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.* Plautus used *homo* with many adjectives that became incorporated in Ciceronian invective: e.g., *h. ignavissume, Men.* 924; *h. insanissume, Ib.* 517; *h. nequissume, Mer.* 305; *h. putide, Ba.* 1163. The device is particularly effective in the vocative.

[37] Jocelyn (*supra*, n. 32) 35-36.

[38] *M. Tulli Ciceronis Pro T. Annio Milone ad Iudices Oratio*, ed. A.C. Clark (Oxford, 1895) 16, n. 8.

[39] *Servi homines: Verr.* 3.91; cf. 1.81; *Phil.* 1.5. *De venalibus...homines electos* (*Sest.* 134).

[40] *Libertini homines: Cat.* 4.16 ; P. Umbrenus: *Ib.*3.14; *v. infra*, chapter three, p. 58; L. Aelius: *Scaur.* 23; Gn. Publicius Menander: *Balb.* 28.

[41] R.W. Rowland defines *necessarii* as persons bound to others in obligation, "Cicero's *necessarii*," *CJ* 65 (1969) 193-94. Whether a *necessarius* is a *homo* or a *vir* depends upon rank.

[42] L. Cossinius (Rowland, p. 196): *bonus homo et non levis* (*Att.* 1.19.11); C. Matius (Rowland, p. 197): *homo...temperatus et prudens* (*Att.* 9.11.2); but King Deiotarus (Rowland, p. 196): *vir cum benevolentia et fide erga p.R.* (*Fam.* 15.4.5), *v. infra*, p. 20.

ex-slave, Mallius Glaucia, is a *homo tenuis* (*Sex. Rosc.* 19). Cicero sometimes drags freedmen into his speeches in order to discredit his opponents, as in the second *Philippic* where he reminds his readers that Antony's former father-in-law was a *libertinus homo* named Fadius (*Phil.* 2.3). In a similar spirit, Cicero impugns Antony as a *gladiator nequissimus* and *homo et humanitatis expers et vitae communis ignarus* (*Phil. 2.7*).

Homines often engage in vulgar professions, as does Vettienus, who may be an "*amicus*" of Cicero's, but is also an *argentarius* who has been dunning the orator for repayment of a debt (*Att.*10.5.3).[43] There is also a certain Ambivius, a *copo* whose establishment is on the Via Latina. A *homo multorum hospitum*, he is a witness for the prosecution who has alleged that he was waylaid by Cluentius and a gang of slaves (*Cluent.* 163). Anonymous *symphoniaci homines* lend the *Verrine Orations* a gratuitous air of disrepute (*Verr.* 5.64).[44]

Significantly, when Cicero wants to praise a freedman, he uses *vir*. This is illustrated with Dionysius, the erstwhile slave and later freedman who tutored Cicero Jr. Dionysius is first encountered in a letter to Atticus in which Cicero assures his friend that he is delighted with the man. There is no *homo doctior* nor *sanctior* (*Att.* 6.1.12). Harmony reigns in a later epistle: Dionysius is not only *doctus* and *sanctus, plenus officii* and *studiosus* toward Cicero, but a *frugi homo*.[45] Then in an effusive outburst: *ne libertinum laudare videar, plane virum bonum!* (7.4.1).This remark would indicate that Cicero's previous comments, including *frugi homo*, are conventional platitudes appropriate to freedmen. *Vir bonus* represents the supreme compliment that Cicero can pay to a former slave. Shadows, however, begin to obtrude into the sunshine of Ciceronian approbation in which Dionysius has been basking, and when Atticus commends the freedman as a *vir optimus et doctissimus* who is *amantissimus* toward Cicero, the orator seems dubious, but nevertheless grants him a grudging palinode: *sit igitur sane bonus vir*

[43] cf. *Att.* 10.13.2; 10.15.4; 12.3.2.

[44] cf. *Symphoniacus*: with *pueri* (i.e., slaves), *Mil.* 55; *servi*, *Div. Caec.* 55; *Pis.* 83.

[45] D.R. Shackleton Bailey notes that *frugi* is often used of freedmen and slaves, though it may refer to persons not necessarily of servile origin, e.g., Fabius Luscus, who Cicero insists is *homo peramans semper nostri*, though he qualifies this by a lame compliment: *...satis enim acutus et permodestus ac bonae frugi. (Att. 4.8a). Cicero's Letters to Atticus* (Cambridge, 1965) 299; Cicero does not use *frugi* of senatorial *viri*, but sometimes applies it to foreigners: e.g., *Siculi homines: Verr.* 3.67; Deiotarus: *Deiot.* 26. *Frugi homo* describes the undistinguished Fonteius (*Font.* 40) who Cicero upgrades to *vir* only when he is trying to impress the jury (*Ib.* 41), or to garner sympathy (*Ib.* 48). *Frugi homo* as a mediocre compliment: *qui frugi homines chresmous appellant*, i.e., *tantum modo utilis; at illud est latius: Tusc.* 3.16; cf. 4.36.

(7.7.1). A final letter on the subject reveals that the honeymoon is over. Dionysius has displayed *superbia* and not enough deference to Cicero. The freedman is again Atticus': *tuus potius quam noster...cui qui noster honos, quod obsequium, quae etiam ad ceteros contempti cuiusdam hominis commendatio defuit?* (*Att.* 8.4.1). Dionysius has again been demoted to the rank of *homo: unus homo omnium loquacissimus et minime aptus ad docendum* (*Ib.*).

Homo: *Laudation for the Less-Distinguished*

There are a few positive adjectives that are used more frequently with *homo* than with *vir*. These are *sanctus, splendidus, nobilis, honestus*, and *sapiens*. As T.E. Kinsey observes in his annotations to the *Pro Quinctio*, *homo* may signify either "lukewarm praise" or serve as commendation for those who are not quite upper-crust.[46] All of the above but *sapiens* are applied to honourable (but second class) members of the municipal aristocracy. *Homo sapientissimus*, on the other hand, is used largely of attorneys in the manner of "learned counsel", and of authorities whom Cicero cites in his speeches.[47]

Whenever Cicero employs *sanctus* to heap unstinting acclaim on consulars, they are *viri sanctissimi*, as are Q. Scaevola (*Sex. Rosc.* 33), A. Torquatus (*Planc.* 27; *Pis.* 47), and Q. Catulus (*Planc.* 12). *Homo sanctus*, on the contrary, adequately acknowledges the accomplishments of the inglorious, such as Fonteius (*Font.* 38), Lucceius (*Cael.* 52), anonymous Asians (*Flacc.* 71) and other supernumeraries (*Quir.* 18). *Homo ... et sapiens et sanctus et severus* is sufficient endorsement for L. Sestius, who had been elected tribune of the plebs *inter homines nobilissimos* (*Sest.* 6). Cicero's announcement that Sestius' son, Publius, had married, first, *honestissimi et spectatissimi viri, G. Albani, filiam* and, later, *optimi et calamitosissimi viri* [*Corneli Scipionis*] *filiam*, illustrates the intransigent upward mobility of the Sestii (*Sest.* 6-7). *Homo sanctissimus modestissimusque omnium* emphasizes the scrupulous discretion of Q. Metellus Pius (*Arch.* 9)—an otherwise *vir sanctissimus*

[46] Kinsey (*supra*, n. 1) 61.

[47] e.g., L. Gellius and Cn. Lentulus, *duo censores, clarissimi viri sapientissimique homines* (*Cluent.* 120). The enclitic addition may be ironical, since Cicero is not happy with their performance; nor is he satisfied with Lucullus, a *homo sapientissimus*, who failed to appoint a special commission (*Ib.* 137). A hypothetical juror: *h. magnus...atque sapiens* (*Ib.* 159); authorities: L. Crassus, *h. eloquentissimus et sapientissimus*; Brutus, *h. in dicendo vehemens et callidus* (*Ib.* 140); and *h. sapiens* (*Ib.* 141). Cicero's displeasure with the elder Egnatius, *homo honestissimus videlicet et sapientissimus*, is evident in *de cuius hominis levitate et inconstantia plura non dicam* (*Ib.* 135).

(*Balb.* 50), whose attention to detail is being contrasted to the negligence and carelessness of Ap. Claudius and A. Gabinius. The epithet, *homo sanctus et diligens*, contributes to the trope, cited by Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 8.6.55), with which Cicero ostensibly praises G. Verres: *quod C. Verres, praetor urbanus, homo sanctus et diligens, subsortitionem eius in eo codice non haberet* (*Cluent.* 91). Should either the delivery, portrayal, or nature of the subject under discussion be out of character with the words uttered, according to Quintilian, the orator is engaging in invective disguised as praise (*Ib.*). *Homo sanctus et diligens* juxtaposed with *praetor urbanus* debases that office, especially when applied to the convicted Verres. *Diligens*, likewise, contributes to the invective, and Cicero uses it as an epithet with *homo* to portray the ex-governor's zest for peculation (2.92; cf. 5.49).

Splendidissimi homines is a condescending term which Cicero appends to the Capuans (*Pis.* 25) and to *municipes* (*Planc.* 21).[48] The elder Sex. Roscius of Ameria is a *homo tam splendidus et gratiosus* (*Sex. Rosc.* 20). Other municipal *homines* include A. Cluentius, *homo...municipii Larinatis...nobilitate facile princeps* (*Cluent.* 11), and G. and L. Fabricius, *fratres gemini...Alatrinati homines* (*Ib.* 46). Several *splendidi homines* from Sicily are cited in the *Verrines*.[49] Like *splendidus*, the adjectives *honestus* and *nobilis*—both employed with *homo*—are considered fitting for members of provincial society.[50] Merely being born in the next town was a political liability of which Cicero was well aware when Clodius snarled "*homo Arpinas*" at him in the Senate (*Att.* 1.16.10); but with all the snobbery of the *inquilinus* who has arrived in the big city (and will only journey to the country to reside in one of his twelve villas), Cicero has adopted the airs of the nobility when referring to countryfolk.

Homo may be used to indicate nationality.[51] Cicero constantly refers to *homines* of foreign extraction: *homines Galli*, *Siculi homines*, and

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[48] e.g., *Latini homines*: *Balb.* 54; an unnamed *homo* from Rudiae: *Arch.* 22; at Larinum, *honesti homines*; at Teanus and Luceria, *homines honestissimi*, and at Ferentinum, *nobilissimi homines*: *Cluent.* 197-198; C. Plotius Nursinus, *eques Romanus splendidus*: *Fin.* 2.58; *Q.* Sosius, *splendidus eques Romanus ex agro Picino*: *Nat.* 3.74.

[49] Some are *equites Romani*: 3.37; others are *locupletes*: 4.45; still others are *honesti*: 3.32; also, M. Annius: 5.73; Diodorus, a *Melitensis, homo...nobilis propter virtutem splendidus et gratiosus*: 4.38. Elsewhere, Cicero worries that Asia may be turned over to the freedmen *hominum gratiosorum splendidorumque*: *Flacc.* 88.

[50] W.K. Lacey notes that *nobilis* is not a political compliment, "*Boni atque Improbi*," *G&R*, Ser. 2, 17 (1971) 8;

[51] Clark, citing Landgraf on *Pro Rosc. Amer.* 8 (*supra*, n. 38) 61, no. 8.

Graeci homines; and barbarians are termed *homines barbari.*[52] Such references need not be pejorative. For instance, the *Gaditani* are *sapientes homines* (*Balb.* 34), and their envoys are *summi homines* (*Ib.* 41), but when Cicero wants to reassure them of his efforts on behalf of his client (an ex-*Gaditanus*), he flatters them as *viri optimi* (*Ib.* 44). Cleophantus, Cluentius' Greek physician, is commended, if faintly, as a *medicus non ignobilis, sed spectatus homo* (*Cluent.* 47), and Duris of Samos is a *homo in historia diligens* (*Att.* 6.1.18). Nevertheless, Cicero's bias against foreigners constantly asserts itself, as in the oration against Piso: M. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, always a *homo*, and a *hominis furacissimi filius* (*Pis.* fr. 4), is a *Semiplacentius* (fr. 6), whom Cicero further stigmatizes as a Transalpine Gaul on his mother's side (*Red. Sen.* 15).[53] Thus it is not surprising to discover that T. Albucius, the erstwhile propraetor of Sardinia (117 B.C.), is a *Graecus homo ac levis* (*Prov. Cons.* 15);[54] or in a "There goes the neighbourhood!" attitude, that Cicero's house has been invaded by a Marsian: *Scatonem illum, hominem sua virtute egentem* (*Dom.* 116). Rare and important is the foreigner who merits the designation *vir*. One is Themistocles, *summus Athenis vir* (*Arch.* 20), and another is King Deiotarus, whom Cicero eloquently defends on a charge of attempting to poison Caesar after the battle of Zela. The orator, in a speech which apparently moved Caesar to tears,[55] states that the king is neither *facinerosus* nor *amentissimus*; he further commends him as a *vir optimus*, who is very far removed *ab homine ...stulto* (*Deiot.* 16).[56] Cicero's charity, however, does not extend to the king's son, Brogitarus, whom he contemptuously categorizes as *Gallograecus, impurus homo ac nefarius* (*Har. Resp.* 28); a *homo* who pollutes religion (*Sest.* 56).[57]

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[52] Gauls: *Cat.* 3.22; Sicilians: *Verr.* 2.70; 4.146; Greeks: *Pis.* 68; *Mil.* 80; *Verr.* 1.53; 4.21; 132; 133; *Balb.* 12; *Sest.* 142; barbarians: *Scaur.* 36; *Font.* 23; *Phil.* 2.112.

[53] cf. *Sest.* 21. When Antony complains that Octavian's mother came from Aricia, Cicero remarks that one would think she had come from Tralles or Ephesus! (*Phil.* 3.15).

[54] Also *paene Graecus* (*Brut.* 102; 131); "A self-styled Hellenist, Albucius liked to flaunt his Graecisms;...Scaevola, apparently, mocked him for his obnoxious Hellenic affectation." E.S. Gruen, *Roman Politics in the Criminal Courts* (Harvard, 1968) 115.

[55] H.H. Scullard, "The political career of a *Novus Homo*," *Studies in Latin Literature* (*supra*, n. 26) 23.

[56] Cicero declares that the king is a *homo gravissimus* and *sanctissimus* (*Deiot.* 20); and also an *optimus et clarissimus vir* (28); cf. *Fam.* 15.4.5., where Deiotarus is a *vir cum benevolentia et fide erga p.R. singulari, tum praestanti magnitudine et animi et consili.*

[57] Opelt (*supra*, n. 2) 154.

The Roman Political Homo

"The stylistic possibilities of *homo*," Nisbet tells us, "are never negligible."[58] Its use in reference to slaves, freedmen, foreigners, and even the dimmer lights of the municipal aristocracy, renders it a likely word for political invective. To call a member of the upper classes, who would normally be termed a *vir*, a *homo*, is an effective way of diminishing his status.[59] Thus *homo* is often used of tribunes of the plebs to identify them closely with the rabble to whom they are paying court.

Homo is appended repeatedly to *popularis*, or used as an epithet of those perceived to be *popularis*.[60] P. Clodius is a *homo popularis* (*Sest.* 116; *Dom.* 80); and T. Labienus, *homo popularis*, betrayed *libertas* to the executioner (*Rabir. Perd.* 12; cf. 13). Two salient characteristics of the *popularis* are *levitas* and *blanditiae*;[61] Plautus uses the latter to characterize prostitutes (*Bacch.* 50; *Tru.* 573). Clodius' meretricious deceit is implicit when Cicero writes: *homo popularis fraudaret improbissime populum* (*Har. Resp.* 42). Just as it is the business of the *meretrix* to ignite men's passions, so is it that of the tribune of the plebs: *L. Quinctius, homo cum summa potestate tum ad inflammandos animos multitudinis accommodatus* (*Cluent.* 79).[62] Clodius, *homo facinerosus*, inflames the spirit of the mob by inciting them *ad incendia* and *caedem* (*Dom.* 12). Tribunes of the plebs pander to the multitude, and *multitudo* itself is a term of disparagement: Cicero persistently equates *popularis* with the criminal, the irrational, the impoverished, and the insane.[63] His portrayal of Clodius as a *furibundus homo ac perditus* tribune of the plebs, who has been terrorizing Gn. Pompey, combines all of these ideas and further suggests lack of self-control (*Sest.* 15). Blind insanity is also evident in the epithet *caecus atque amens tribunus pl.* (*Ib.* 17).[64] Significantly, a demagogue, such as Quinctius, is a *homo maxime popularis* (*Cluent.* 77), while a "good" tribune, such as G. Fannius, *vir bonus et innocens* (*Sest.*

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[58] R.G.M. Nisbet, ed., *M. Tulli Ciceronis de Domo sua ad Pontifices Oratio* (Oxford, 1939) 79.

[59] For a thorough discussion of degradation by means of comic techniques, K. Geffcken, "Comedy in *Pro Caelio*," *Mnemosyne*, suppl. 38-41 (1973-74), particularly p. 24.

[60] The only times Cicero uses *vir* with *popularis* are the following: *Viros...quos dicant fuisse populares* (*Acad.* 2.13). *Claros viros, sed tamen populares* (*Ib.* 2.72).

[61] R. Seager, "Cicero and the word *popularis*," *CQ* N.S.22 (1972) 335-6.

[62] Cicero implies bribery of Quinctius by mixing monetary terms with sexual innuendo, and calls him *acerbus, criminosus popularis homo ac turbulentus* (*Cluent.* 94).

[63] Seager (*supra*, n. 61) 328; 335-6.

[64] Opelt (*supra*, n. 2) 141.

114), is numbered among tribunes who are *minime populares* (*Ib.* 113). The hiatus between the two is epitomized in the conceptual gulf between *homo* and *vir*.[65]

Homo is frequently used with adjectives indicative of public enemies.[66] *Audax*, deemed to be antithetical to *bonus*,[67] is one of these. It follows that an *audax homo*—as Cicero terms Verres, Catiline, Clodius and Antony—is the antithesis of the *bonus vir*.[68] C. Wirzubski equates *audax* with "extreme radicalism, irresponsible demagogy, disregard for law, and revolution."[69] Just as a *hostis*, according to Cicero, is no longer a *civis*, so a *homo*, whom he has branded a *hostis*, is no longer a *vir*. *Viri* are concerned with the welfare of the Republic; *homines* are not. This is evident in the first *Catilinarian* where Cicero castigates *homines bonorum inimicos*, who are *hostes* to their country (*Cat.* 1.33). *Homines* are wracked *aegri morbo gravi cum aestu febrique* (*Ib.* 1.31). They are constantly compared and contrasted with *viri*.[70] For instance, *inertes homines* have laid traps for *fortissimis viris* in the Catilinarian conspiracy (*Cat.* 2.10). Although Wirzubski sees the "choice of abusive or laudatory terms" to be based upon political rather than moral considerations,[71] moral failings are nevertheless inherent in *inertes homines*, which implies lack of masculinity appropriate for those who lay ambushes. Thus Clodius, *homo effeminatus*, tries to murder a *fortissimum virum*, [*T. Annium Milonem*] (*Mil.* 89).[72] Clodius' craven deficiency in even the basic attributes of a *vir* is evident in the contrast between *homo effeminatus* and *fortissimus vir*. A similar odious comparison is evident between Clodius, *furibundus homo ac perditus*, and that undaunted *vir clarissimus*, ever *amicissimus* to Cicero, Gn. Pompey (*Sest.* 15).[73]

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[65] M. Livius Drusus, tribune of 91 B.C.: *h. clarissimus ac potentissimus* (*Cluent.* 153). Cicero uses *potens* of tribunes, kings, and G. Verres. Merguet (*supra*, n. 8) s.v. *potens*; Verres: *Verr. A. pr.* 25; 40; 4.22; 5.180. cf. *Vat.* 21.

[66] Opelt (*supra*, n.2) 137; 143-44.

[67] C. Wirzubski, "Audaces: a study in political phraseology," JRS 51 (1961) 13. Cicero uses *audax* for beasts, cutthroats, felons, tribunes, and slaves. Merguet (*supra*, n. 8) s.v. *audax*. Opelt connects *audax* with the overthrow of the Republic: *hominum audacium, eversorum rei publicae* [Clodius and Co.] (*Sest.* 86), (*supra*, n. 2) 136.

[68] Catiline: *Cat.* 2.13; 3.17; 27; *Sull.* 81; 92; Clodius: *Phil.* 8.16; Antony: *Phil.* 2.43; 2.78; 6.2; Verres: *Div. Caec.*6; with *amentissimus*: *Verr. A. Pr.* 7.

[69] Wirzubski (*supra*, n. 67) 14.

[70] Clark cites *Sest.* 89 (*supra*, n. 38) 79, n. 7.

[71] Wirzubski (*supra*, n. 67) 14.

[72] Cicero emphasizes *insidiae*: A.M. Stone, "*Pro Milone*: Cicero's second thoughts," *Antichthon* 14 (1980) 94.

[73] Other contrasts: *homines improbi* complain about Cicero *ad viros fortes* (*Dom.* 41); L. Gellius Poplicola, who has sullied the name of the equestrian order, is a *homo et fratre indignus viro clarissimo atque optimo consule* [*L. Marcio Philippo*] (*Sest.* 110).

Clodius is always a *homo* unless Cicero can get mileage out of the *Bona Dea* Festival, the tribune's lack of fitness for the priesthood, or his supposed incest with Clodia.[74] In each instance, Cicero uses *vir* in a trope designed to amplify Clodius' sacrilegious propensities. For example, Cicero writes Atticus that Clodius was *unus vir* at Caesar's house (*Att.* 2.7.3). *Unus vir* is full of rhetorical implications. For one thing, it emphasizes the enormity of a sole male presence at a women's festival; for another, *vir*, which Cicero uses as a synonym for paramour in reference to A. Gabinius, an erstwhile *amator* and *vir* of Catiline (*Red. Sen.* 10; 12), suggests sexual motives for Clodius' presence. Geffcken cites numerous ancient sources, which stated that Clodius' presence betokened hanky-panky with Pompeia, Caesar's wife,[75] and Suetonius says that the rumour was a persistent one (*Jul.* 6.2). Whether Cicero was responsible for promulgating that rumour, we do not know,[76] although he does his best to whet his readers' prurient appetites with dark innuendo: *nefandum adulterium in pulvinaribus sanctissimis* (*Mil.* 72).

The full irony of *unus vir* may not be immediately appreciated. The term is found in Livy, who uses it repeatedly to signify heroic generals who have saved the State, and in Tacitus, who indicates that it may have been a title voted to the successful *imperator* by acclamation of his troops (*Hist.* 3.3.5).[77] According to K. Geffcken, Cicero's vituperation against Clodia mirrors that used against her brother, and role reversal is, furthermore, an integral part of their invective.[78] Both Clodia and Clodius are perceived as generals:[79] Clodia commands a *mulieraria* squadron, which entraps *fortes viros* in the baths (*Cael.* 66-67); Clodius commands a platoon *facinerosorum hominum et perditorum*, which ambushes Milo on the highway (*Vat.* 40). As the epithet *mulier potens* (*Cael.* 62) masculinizes Clodia the *imperatrix* of the "*Bellum Balnearum*", so *unus vir*—assuming that its military connotations were current in Cicero's day—emasculates Clodius, since it calls attention to the fact that his assault on a feminine citadel in the "*Bellum Bonae Deae*" was totally ineffectual (*Att.* 2.7.3).

A second example, alluding to the Bona Dea scandal, similarly

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[74] Clodius is also a *sororius adulter* (*Pis.* 28); Opelt (*supra*, n. 2) 155.

[75] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 59) 65: Plut.*Caes.* 9; *Cic.*28; Vell. 2.45.1; App. *BC* 2.14; *S.*7; Dio. 37.45; Liv. *Per.* 103.

[76] On Cicero as rumour monger, *v. infra*, chapter three, 50.

[77] F. Santoro L'hoir, "Heroic epithets and recurrent themes in *Ab Urbe Condita*," *TAPA* 120 (1990) 221-41. Cf. *Har. Resp.* 49: Pompey, *Vir unus omnium fortissimus.*

[78] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 59) 39-40.

[79] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 59) 39-40; cf. May (*supra*, n. 1) 114.

stresses lack of masculinity.[80] Cicero appraises Clodius as a *mulier* among *viros*, and a *vir* among *mulieres* (*Dom.* 139; cf. Suet. *Jul.* 6.2). The anomalous sexual overtones emphasize the tribune's sacrilege (*Dom.* 139). Geffcken believes that Cicero's portrayal of Clodius at the *Bona Dea* is that of an effeminate Dionysus.[81] The inconsistency between Clodius, the goatish satyr, and Clodius, the effete corybant, is irrelevant. The image of the furibund tribune penetrating the sacred feminine mysteries and transmogrifying them into a Bacchanale would demonstrate to the *pontifices*, the *sacerdotes*, and anyone else listening, Clodius' unsuitability concerning matters of religion:

> Imperitus adulescens, novus sacerdos, sororis precibus, matris minis adductus, ignarus, invitus, sine collegis, sine libris, sine auctore, sine fictore, furtim, mente ac lingua titubante fecisse dicatur, praesertim cum iste impurus atque impius hostis omnium religionum, qui contra fas et inter viros saepe mulier et inter mulieres vir fuisset, ageret illam rem ita raptim et turbulente, uti neque mens neque vox neque lingua consisteret (*Dom.* 139).

The passage is loaded with words which Cicero regularly uses with *homo: adulescens, novus, ignarus, invitus, iste, impurus, impius*, and *hostis*.[82] The dionysiac or bacchanalian imagery is implicit in Cicero's invective after his return from exile, in which he vilifies Clodius as a *homo* with adjectives indicative of frenzied madness and pollution, the epithets being reminiscent of the criminal activities for which the Bacchanalians were notorious: *homo vaesanus ac furiosus* (*Dom.* 3); *homo facinerosus* (*Ib.* 12); *homo ad caedem imminens* (*Ib.* 14); *furibundus homo ac perditus* (*Sest.* 15); *homo...turpissimus, sceleratissimus, contaminatissimus* (*Dom.* 23); *homo amens* (*Ib.* 40; cf. 144); and Clodius' band of desperados is even called a *concursatio nocturna* (*Dom.* 14).[83]

There is no *stuprum* so base to which the pernicious Clodius would not stoop, as Cicero indicates when he utters his famous gaffe: *istius mulieris viro—fratrem volui dicere* (*Cael.* 32). Geffcken sees the remark to have been a malicious slur to provoke laughter.[84] As the Bacchanalians were once perceived to be sunken in criminal degeneracy, so now is P. Clodius Pulcher. This notion is reflected in the vituperation that employs

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[80] cf. *Mil.* 55: *Clodius tamen mulier, inciderat in viros; cf. Opelt* (*supra*, n. 2) 154.

[81] Geffcken cites homosexual innuendo and unmanly dress as favourite *topoi* of oratory (*supra*, n. 59) 82-84.

[82] See Merguet (*supra*, n. 8).

[83] Other bacchanalian elements present in Clodius' portrayal are *adulescens, mulieres, incendia* and *caedes*; senatorial propaganda against the cult is preserved in Livy 39.8.6-8.

[84] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 59) 36; cf. Opelt (*supra*, n. 2) 155.

vir in sexual contexts and *homo* with the above-mentioned pejorative adjectives.[85] *Boni viri* are no longer safe with Clodius at large (*Dom.* 8). Cicero's invective was intended to destroy Clodius; to drive out the menace to society and religion for the good of the community.[86] As the Bacchanalians had been stamped out, so must be P. Clodius!

The orator is comparatively reserved in his use of *homo* with pejoratives for Catiline, confining himself to *homo ... timidus* and *permodestus* (*Cat.* 2.12), *ille homo audacissimus* (*Ib.* 2.13), and *homo tam acer...audax...paratus...callidus...in scelere vigilans* (*Cat.* 3.17). All references are from speeches before the people, among whom Catiline had a large following, which he did not lose until Cicero alarmed them with the supposed torching of the city (Sall. *BC.* 48.1). Cicero's use of *homo* with negative adjectives before the populace may reflect scare tactics intended to win the plebs over to his side.[87]

Homo with pejoratives is a tactical offensive weapon which might be regarded as the orator's verbal *S.C.U.* The periods when he deploys it the most are significant: 70 B.C., against Verres; the speeches of 57-56, against Clodius and Piso; and in the fourteen *Philippics* against Antony. The prosecution of G. Verres was Cicero's first big case, and he had to match wits with the formidable Hortensius, convict Verres and get compensation for the Sicilians.[88] "To do so," writes G. Kennedy, "he needed the full scope to develop the conventional ingredients of rhetoric and especially vivid description, vivid characterization, and overwhelming emotion."[89] In the first *actio*, which pitted Cicero against the "big guns" of the Senate, including the Metelli, the orator shoots straight from the hip: the invective hits its mark, and Verres is labelled *pecuniosus homo* (*A. Pr.* 1); *homo vita atque factis omnium iam opinione damnatus* (*Ib.* 2); *homo...depeculator aerarii, vexator Asiae atque Pamphyliae, praedo iuris urbani, labes atque pernicies provinciae Siciliae* (*Ib.*); *homo audacissimus atque amentissimus* (*Ib.* 7); *homo avarissimus et libidinosissimus* (*Ib.* 13); *iste homo perditus* (*Ib.* 21); *iste homo potens cum filio blando et gratioso* (*Ib.* 25); *homo perditissimus atque alienissimus* (*Ib.* 28); *iste homo desperatus* (*Ib.* 35); and *homo nocentissimus pecuniosissimusque* (*Ib.* 47).[90] In the undelivered second *actio*, the list

[85] Opelt (*supra*, n. 2) 161.

[86] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 59) 69.

[87] May writes that Cicero had to convince the people that Catiline had embraced foreign values (*supra*, n. 1) 53-5.

[88] G. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World, 300 B.C.- 300 A.D.* (Princeton, 1972) 156-159.

[89] *Ibid.* 160.

[90] Nisbet calls Cicero "aggressive, successful, and right." (*supra*, n. 26) 52.

continues in an "and-then-I-would-have-called-him" spirit. Too numerous and repetitive to detail, a few choice adjectives joined to *homo* are: *nefarius* (1.69); *spurcissimus* (1.94); *stultissimus* (1.102); *importunus* (1.113); *deterrimus* and *impudentissimus* (2.40); *crudelis* and *sceleratus* (2.77); *libidinosissimus, nequissimus* and *flagitiosissimus* (2.192); *improbus* and *impurus* (3.140).[91]

The next period in which Cicero couples *homo* and negative adjectives with frequency is as the embittered politician returned from an exile imposed upon him by collusion of a gang of three: Gabinius, *homo emersus...ex diuturnis tenebris lustrorum ac stuprorum* (*Sest.* 20); Clodius, *homo furiosus* (*Dom.* 3); and Piso, *homo taeterrimus, crudelissimus, fallacissimus* (*Dom.* 23). *Homo* with pejoratives proliferates the invective of the speeches of 57-56; it is the weapon of the cornered Cicero, and he lashes out with it. There was no need to encumber his speeches with vituperative epithets during the Catilinarian conspiracy when he had his consular authority and the consensus of most of the Senate behind him. Their employment reflects the hysteria which Nisbet finds in the orations of those two years.[92]

Cicero fires his ultimate blast of vitriol in his glorious last stand against Antony. Like his predecessors Verres and Clodius, Antony is a *homo amentissimus* (*Phil.* 2.42; 5.37; cf. 3.2), and a *homo audacissimus* (2.78; 5.13; 6.2). He is, furthermore: *h. acutus* (2.28); *h. adflictus et perditus* (3.25); *h. detestabilis* (2.110); *h. impotentissimus* (5.42); *h. ingratissimus* (13.41); *h. nequam* and *nequissimus* (2.56; 61; 70; 78); *h. numquam sobrius* (2.81); *h. perditissimus* (5.13); *h. profligatus* (3.1); *h. sceleratus* (4.12); *h. simplex* (2.111); *h. stupidus* (3.22); *h. turpissimus* (2.105); *h. vehemens et violentus* (5.19), among others. At one point, Antony ranks even lower than a *homo*: *Non est vobis res, Quirites, cum scelerato homine ac nefario, sed cum immani taetraque belva!* (*Phil.* 4.12). The orator must have been well aware of the consequences of his unbridled tongue, and that Antony might be less than amused at being called *miserae mulieris fecunditas calamitosa* (2.58). This defamatory pasquinade, featuring *homo* with pejoratives, represents Cicero fighting the desperate battle of one who is convinced that the Republic is lost. As H.H. Scullard remarks, only two other consulars had the courage to oppose Antony; now that Cicero had the necessary *auctoritas*, he was

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[91] For a complete list, Merguet (*supra*, n. 8) s.v. *homo*.
[92] Nisbet (*supra*, n. 26) 63.

without consular backing.[93] He therefore exceeded himself in rhetorical excoriation.

Such invective is in the tradition of Demosthenes, who similarly employed *anthropos* as opposed to *aner* in his vituperation.[94] Moreover, the Greek orator used *hanthropos* (with a rough breathing), and presumably *homo* produced a similar sound of contempt.[95] While Demosthenes' gender terminology must be left to another study, some parallels in usage should be commented upon; for Cicero's predecessor likewise used *anthropos* in a negative sense as a means of attack. An instance is the defendant, Aristogeiton, a personage of no visible means of support (or interest in public life), who slithers into the *agora* like a serpent, his beady eyes darting in search of a gull whom he can squeeze dry or slander. *Ouden anthropos metrios*, he frequents neither barber nor perfumer, his bosom companions being Curses, Calumny, Malice, Faction and Sedition (25.52). Aristogeiton would obviously be at home in the Roman Forum with Piso, Clodius and Antony. There are many other species of *anthropos* which Cicero has transformed into the *genus homo*. For instance, we meet the *homo egens* (*Verr.* 2.94) in the *anthropos penes*;[96] the *homo avarus* (*Verr. A. pr.* 41) in the *pleonektes anthropos* (48.46); the *audax homo* (e.g., *Cat.* 3.17) in the *tolmeros anthropos*;[97] the *homo nocens* (*Verr.* 1.47) in the *adikos anthropos*;[98] the *homo inimicus* (Vat. 10) in the *echthros anthropos* (4.50), and perhaps *homo perditus; h. sceleratissimus; h. turpissimus; h, nefarius; h, facinerosus* and *h. nequissimus* are composites of Demosthenes' epithet for Aeschines, *ho phaulotatos kai dysmenestatos anthropos tei polei* (18.197).[99] There are other similarities: Cicero's *adulescens homo* (e.g. *Cael.* 50) is the *neos*

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[93] Scullard (*supra*, n. 55) 25.

[94] *Index Demosthenicus*, ed. S. Preuss (Leipzig, 1892) s.v. *anthropos; aner*. E.C. Keuls directed my attention to the pejorative nature of *anthropos* in its rare use with the feminine definite article.

[95] *Ibid.* s.v. *hanthropos*. Aeschines uses *hanthropos* derogatorily of Demosthenes: 99.1; 125.7; 157.2; 212.11; *Aeschines Against Ctesiphon (On the Crown)*, R.B. Richardson, ed. (N.Y. , 1979) 114. Dionysius of Halicarnassus remarks upon Demosthenes' use of harsh sounds to evoke emotion in his listeners (*Dem.* 55); he also comments on the unpleasantness of the sound of "s", which he likens to the hiss produced by an irrational beast (DH *Rhet.* 14), and Cicero persistently couples *homo* with two or three pejorative adjectives that end in *-issimus* in his invective against Verres and Clodius. A similar effect is evident when Demosthenes uses *hanthropos* with pejorative adjectives in the nominative.

[96] Dem. 21.83; 24.112; 24.165.

[97] *Ibid.* 40.53; 43.41; cf. 52.1; 56.19.

[98] *Ibid.* 48.36; 48.46; 48.56.

[99] Cicero: *homo perditus*, *Sull.* 33; 66; 75; *Dom.* 110; *Har. Resp.* 46; *Sest.* 2; 9; 15; 60; 85; 106; *Vat.* 21; 40; *Sex. Rosc.* 112; *Verr. A. pr.* 15; 21; 28; 3.5; 134; 199; 4.37; *Cat.* 1.13; 2.8; 11; 3.14; 4.5; 8; *Mil.* 47; *Phil.* 1.5; 2.15; 91; 3.1; 25; 5.13; 9.9; *Fr. Bob.* 13.8; *h. sceleratus*: *Cluent.*30; *Dom.* 23; *Phil.* 13.34; *h. turpissimus*: *Sex. Rosc.* 50; *Cluent.* 87; *Verr.*

anthropos in Demosthenes, who makes the distinction between the callow youth and the *aner* who has passed his *dokimasia.*[100] As honourable Romans are *viri,* so members of the jury are *andres Athenaioi.*[101] Non-Athenians, however, are *anthropoi,* as are other familiar stereotypes, such as slaves and the disenfranchised.[102] This all suggests that Ciceronian usage may have been founded upon Greek rhetorical prototypes.

Roman factional *Realpolitik* being what it was, yesterday's *homo* might be tomorrow's *vir.* Cicero's political career endured over forty years; such an extended period of public life brought definite changes in policy.[103] Political permutations are reflected in Cicero's vocabulary. For instance, T. Labienus, the quondam *popularis* who handed over innocent *cives* to the executioner (*Rab. Perd.* 13), is metamorphosized into a *vir magnus* after he has deserted Julius Caesar (*Att.* 7.13a.3). The choice between *vir* or *homo* may well depend upon the audience. Before the Senate, Cicero usually numbers C. Gracchus among *homines seditiosissimi* such as L. Appuleius Saturninus, *florens homo popularis* (*Sest.* 101; *Dom.* 82).[104] Note, though, how Cicero performs verbal alchemy, when speaking before the people about the *lex agraria.* Not only does he transmute himself into a *popularem consulem* (*Leg. Agr.* 6-9), but he also transfigures the brothers Gracchus into *clarissimos, ingeniosissimos, amantissimos plebei Romanae viros* (*Ib.* 2.10). The orator's use of terms normally reserved for the upper echelons of the political establishment for plebeian tribunes in speeches before the people is sheer demagogy.[105] In resorting to such tactics, Cicero, according to the precepts of the *boni,* was indeed a true *popularis consul.*

1.63; 3.30; *Dom.* 23; *Phil.* 2.105; *Pis.* 72; *h. nefarius*: *Verr.* 1.69; 2.91; 3.5; 5.72; *Har. Resp.* 28; *Planc.* 98; *Cluent.* 42; 201; *Leg. Agr.* 2.87; *Cat.* 4.8; *Muren.* 83; *Phil.* 2.17; 4.12; *h. facinerosus: Dom.* 12; *Vat.* 40; *Tull.* 12; *h. nequam*: *Verr.* 1.63; 73; 83; 2.192; 3.30; 33; 84; *Font.* 39; *Cluent.* 97; *Leg. Agr.*1.7; Demosthenes: 19.202. Other dreadful *anthropoi*: *sketlioteros*, 30.36; *Poneros kai sukophantes*: 58.27; Philip II: *hanthropos hubristes*, 1.23; Many dubious types are lumped under *toioutos*: 35.54; 45.53; 48.56; 24.133.

[100] *Neos anthropos* may ultimately be from where *novus homo* derives; *aner einai dokimastheien*: 27.5; 29.43; 30.6.

[101] *Index Demosthenicus* (*supra*, n. 94) s.v. *andres Athenaioi*; cf. *andres dikastai.*

[102] *Anthropos metoikos*: 52.29; a Megarian is an *anthropos sophron*, the equivalent of *homo prudens*. Cicero refers to *Graeci homines* who are *prudentes*: *Tusc.* 265; Demosthenes: 52.3; a Tanagran, 25.61; the disenfranchised: Timarchus, *talaiporos anthropos*, 19.284.

[103] Lacey (*supra*, n. 50) 7.

[104] Seager (*supra*, n. 61) 335.

[105] Cicero's restraint in using gender expressions in his popular speeches perhaps stems from the fact that he indulges in less invective than in the Senate.

CHAPTER TWO

THE OBSCENE *MULIER* AND THE NOT-HEARD *FEMINA*:

Cicero's Feminine Terminology and Comic Prototypes

Given the nature of Roman politics and Cicero's career, women occupy far less space in his works than do men. This being so, distinctions between feminine terms are less clearcut. Nevertheless, the contexts in which such terms are used demonstrate a significant pattern first suggested by Axelson and later corroborated by Adams: that, in Cicero's lexicon, *femina* is a word of respect always used with positive adjectives and never with the pejoratives that often accompany *mulier*.[1] Although the topic has been broached by the above scholars, it nevertheless deserves investigation in greater depth; for a clear understanding of feminine terminology casts additional light upon the role of women in public life of the late Republic; such an analysis is important not for gauging Cicero's personal attitude about women, but rather for testing his official posture towards them as both attorney and politician, employing accepted rhetorical *topoi*.

Between the terms *femina* and *mulier*, the former is a *rara avis*, being employed only 33 times in Cicero's entire corpus; the latter, however, is used over 150 times in the orator's speeches alone.[2] It should not be assumed, though, that infrequent use of the one implies an indiscriminate preference for the other; for scrutinization of the terms reveals patterns similar to those apparent in the orator's employment of *vir* and *homo*. Furthermore, it stands to reason that if there were differentiations between masculine terms, the same variations would be applicable to feminine. This indeed proves to be the case: feminine terms, like their masculine counterparts, are founded upon social status. Consequently moral overtones, based upon rank—or lack of it—accrue to the respec-

[1] B. Axelson, *Unpoetische Wörter: ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Lateinischen Dichtersprache* (Lund, 1945) 54-55; J.N. Adams, "Latin words for "woman" and "wife"," *Glotta* 50 (1972) 235.

[2] H. Merguet, *Lexikon zu den Reden des Cicero, mit Angabe sämtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1877) s.v. *femina*; *mulier*;

—, *Lexikon zu den Philosophichen Schriften Cicero's mit Angabe sämtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1887) s.v. *femina*; *mulier*; Wm. A. Oldfather, *et al.*, *Index Verborum Ciceronis Epistularum* (Urbana, 1938) s.v. *femina*; *mulier*.

tive terms. *Femina* parallels *vir* in that it is applied specifically to women of the highest rank. Because of the word's aristocratic moral qualities, Cicero sometimes employs it to confirm the respectability of a supportive witness, or to create an atmosphere of sympathetic response for the benefit of the jury—the word *femina* often evoking connotations of helplessness based upon idealized values of femininity.[3] *Mulier*, on the other hand, corresponds to *homo*,[4] being used to indicate members of the lower classes, including freed slaves, foreigners and barbarians. Moreover, Cicero employs the former term with pejorative adjectives for members of the upper classes, as he did the latter to males of the aristocracy, in order to diminish their status. In other words, *mulier*, like *homo*, was used as a term of abuse.

Similar tendencies may be observed in the comedies of Plautus, where *mulier* is used over 300 times, and *femina*, as a substantive for woman, only thirteen. Since the purpose of a playwright is similar to that of a lawyer or politician—to convince what might prove to be a difficult audience—there is an element of rhetoric that is common to each of their media. Before launching into Ciceronian use of the terms, a brief analysis of Plautus' usage would be instructive.[5]

The sparse use of *femina* by Plautus is significant, and its infrequent employment sets it apart from *mulier*. *Femina* is appropriate to mannerly salute, while *mulier* is often used as a form of rude address for slaves,[6] as in *Cistellaria*, when the *servus* Lampadio, accompanying his mistress, Phanostrata, calls after the *ancilla* Halisca: *Mulier mane! Sunt qui volunt te conventam*! The vocative use of the generic term, the imperative mood, as well as the *sunt qui*, each lend the greeting an aura of insolence. Lampadio then informs Halisca that she is wanted by a *bona femina* (using the respectful term for his mistress) and a *malus masculus* (a laugh line, in reference to himself). That the maid is not impressed by Lampadio's air of superiority is evident in her reply, in which she dispenses with formalities in an ironical greeting: *Mi homo et mea mulier, vos saluto*![7]

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[3] Axelson (*supra*, n. 1) 54-55.

[4] In every sense except that of *mulier* as wife. See Adams (*supra*, n. 1) 249-51.

[5] G. Lodge, *Lexikon Plautinum* (Leipzig, 1926) s.v. *femina*; *mulier*. K. Geffcken notes the resemblance between rhetorical techniques and those of comedy, and writes that Cicero shows a greater appreciation for the stage than does any other Roman orator. "Comedy in the *Pro Caelio*," *Mnemosyne* suppl. 38-41 (1973-74) 7.

[6] e.g., *Heus tu mulier*! *Cu.* 185; *Heus, mulier, tibi dico*! *Men.* 378; v. Lodge (*supra*, n. 5) s.v. *mulier*, *voc.*

[7] *Ci.* 701a-727; H.D. Jocelyn cites the insulting use of *homo* in the vocative: "*Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto*," *Antichthon* 6 (1972) 34; he identifies the noun with the lower classes and notes that no *servus* or son in comedy ever addresses a *paterfamilias* as *homo* (*Ib.*).

The *ancilla*'s impudence may be inferred from Lampadio's aside to Phanostrata in which he characterizes Halisca as a nasty piece of baggage: *mala mers...et callida*. There is a definite contrast between *mulier*, appropriate to the slave, and *femina*, the proper term for the mistress; *mulier*, used by an *ancilla* of a superior, is a calculated insult designed to diminish status, just as *homo* is intended to cut the insolent slave down to his proper size.

The following passage from *Aulularia* likewise sets *femina* apart from *mulier*, the generic term that implies all the liabilities inherent in the female sex, according to Roman thinking. *Femina*, as opposed to *mulier*, is suitable to flattery as well as polite address. In act one, Eunomia, a *matrona*, enters with lamentations, disparaging herself as a *mulier*. Her brother Megadorus, however, in an attempt at cajolery, greets her: *Da mihi, optuma femina, manum*! (*Au.* 135). Eunomia, who cannot believe that her brother's words of praise are meant for her, delivers the punchline, that with a woman there is no such thing as *optuma*: there are only degrees of *malus*: one woman is *peior* than the other (*Ib.* 120-40). The empty flattery behind *optuma femina* is not lost on Eunomia; and Plautus has employed the elevated word which, juxtaposed to the general term *mulier*, helps establish the entire joke.

Similar contrasts are seen in *Amphitryo* and *Miles Gloriosus*. In the former play, Mercury notes that Juppiter is about to gull Alcumena: *Opservatote...quam blande mulieri palpabitur* (507); subsequently, when Alcumena expresses doubts about Juppiter's love, the god, with a display of hurt feelings, asks: *Satin habes, si feminarum nulla est quam aeque deligam* (509)? To Mercury, Alcumena is a *mulier* like all the others, about to fall victim to a smooth line of speech.[8] Juppiter's honeyed words, however, imply that she is a *femina*: in expressing preference for Alcumena over other *feminae*, he is referring to ladies of distinction, as she presumably is, otherwise the compliment would fall flat.

In *Miles Gloriosus*, the wily Palaestrio, about to hoodwink Pyrgopolynices, offers the puffed-up warrior a ring, supposedly from the beautiful young wife of the *senex* next door. She is described as *luculenta atque festiva femina*, a guarantee that comes with an assurance that the girl is *ingenua*. Pyrgopolynices is especially concerned that she not be *libertina*. Reassured, he announces that his present *concubina* is excess

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[8] Alcumena is "beset by suggestive and aggressive remarks from Juppiter, Mercury, and her husband." Geffcken (*supra*, n. 5) 27.

baggage, and that the *mulier* will be jettisoned forthwith (958-76). Palaestrio is using the girl as bait for the braggart warrior; the word *femina* is a component in his "salespitch" which emphasizes her free status and supposed respectability. *Mulier*, on the other hand, appropriate to *concubina*, suggests a casual alliance made with a slave or freedwoman.

Mulier in reference to women in general is totally neutral. The above examples, however, demonstrate its pejorative possibilities, particularly when juxtaposed to *femina*, the term of esteem or distinction. Aristocratic overtones are implicit in the polite address of Megadorus, the protestations of Juppiter, and the salesmanship of Palaestrio. In *Rudens*, when the high priestess of Venus calls herself *misericordior...feminarum* (*Ru.* 281), she is using the vocabulary of the aristocracy with its implied concomitant virtues. Plautus' choice of the elevated term *femina* is in all probability deliberate, for he was a professional playwright, skilled in his craft.[9] J.A. Hanson remarks: "Even the most conventional and literally meaningless phrase in Plautus...is to be regarded as meaningful, both because of its historical significance and its conceptual potential."[10]

If one accepts the aristocratic overtones of *femina*, one can perceive the ludicrous nature of the line that a *femina* once gave birth to a lion (*Vi.* 116).[11] Similarly, if one acknowledges that *mulier*, in addition to its generic usage, pertains to the servile and libertine orders, one will appreciate the irony behind the statement of the pimp, Dordalus, who has just manumitted a slave-girl; in an effusion of self-congratulation, he styles himself a *probus* and *lepidus civis*, because he has increased the population of Attica by one *femina* (*Per.* 474-5). The word, by Roman standards, is as ridiculous in reference to a freed slave as is the notion that a pimp could ever be an upright citizen. Plautus is playing for laughs, and *femina* as well as *probus* establishes the joke.

Hanson notes that the language of comedy plays upon the expected as well as the unexpected.[12] Plautus tends to put saucy and elegant speech into the mouths of his slaves, who have high opinions of themselves. A similar technique was employed by Petronius (*v. infra*, chapter ten, p. 181). Thus when Alcumena's slave Bromia complains that she is the most wretched *femina* alive (*Am.* 1060), she is using the terminology of

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[9] E. Segal, *Roman Laughter: the Comedy of Plautus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968) 1.

[10] J.A. Hanson, "Plautus as a sourcebook for Roman religion," *TAPA* 90 (1959) 59.

[11] Tacitus uses the general *mulier* in a similar prodigious announcement: *Anguem enixa mulier* (*Ann.* 14.12.9.).

[12] Hanson (*supra*, n. 10) 51.

her mistress in the world-upside-down milieu of Plautine comedy which parodied the restrictions of a "society obsessed with hierarchy and ritual."[13] The impudent dialogue of the two slaves in *Persa* may be interpreted in this light. Paegnium calls Sophoclidisca *scelesta femina* (205-8), which G.E. Duckworth, citing their "rapid bright repartee," renders as "naughty jade."[14] *Femina* is pejorative in this instance, but neither negative context nor use of the word by slaves in reference to themselves detracts from its fundamental aristocratic nature. A slave may have been socially inferior, but, human nature being what it is, he or she had self-respect and was therefore likely to use terms of his or her social betters in private.

The Roman Political Femina *and the Homespun* Mulier

As far as Cicero is concerned, comparatively few women are singled out as *feminae*. Among those who are so honoured are the foremost female members of Roman oligarchical society; as *vir* was modified by *clarissimus*, so *femina* is by *clarissima*.[15] Several women of rank are mentioned in Cicero's correspondence when the orator sends regards to the wives of his political associates. *Femina* in these instances is always accompanied by positive adjectives, such as *optima*, *gravissima*, and *praestantissima*, modifiers which, when employed with *vir*, hold political overtones. For instance, Cicero thanks M. Claudius Marcellus for the political support given by his mother, a *gravissima atque optima femina*—backing above and beyond that usually given by a *mulier*. Although *mulier* is used in its generic sense and represents the "ordinary woman," *femina* is em-

[13] Segal (*supra*, n.9) 13. Among the great number of epitaphs that use *vir* or *femina* as an appositive epithet (OTHER than senatorial inscriptions which employ the titles *c.v.* (*clarissimus vir*) and *c.f.* (*clarissima femina*), *vir* is used as husband almost 200 times on the tombs of freedmen; of the 83 that use *femina* (with such adjectives as *rarissima* and *carissima*, but never *clarissima*), the majority belong to freed slaves. *CIL* 6, s.v. *vir*; *femina*. Use of terms which, except for the above-mentioned titles, are avoided by the free-born, indicates that members of the libertine orders perceived the words to hold status value (*v infra*, conclusion). L.R. Taylor mentions the lengths to which freedmen went to hide evidence of their inferior status on their tombstones, "Freedmen and freeborn in the epitaphs of imperial Rome," *AJP* 82.2 (1961) 122.

[14] G.E. Duckworth, ed., *The Complete Roman Drama* (N.Y., 1942) v. 1,677. Duckworth's translation retains the sense of the epithet and demonstrates that there are times when gender terms ought not to be taken literally as "man" or "woman". For instance, Cicero's "*homo nequissimus*" is better rendered "low-down skunk" (or equivalent colloquialism) than "man of the basest sort" (or similar translation). I.Opelt, in reference to the slaves in *Persa*, terms their repartee "*Katz-und-Mausspiel*", *Die Lateinischen Schimpfwörter mit verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen: eine Typologie* (Heidelberg, 1965) 83.

[15] e.g., *Tusc.* 1.27. Cicero rarely ever uses *matrona*. Merguet (*supra*, n.2) s.v. *matrona*; Oldfather (*supra*, n.2) s.v. *matrona*.

ployed as the formulaic term of respect cited by Adams.[16] There is, nevertheless, the implication that the average *mulier* would not lift a finger to aid Cicero; but since Marcellus' mother (like the enlightened tribunician *viri* of chapter one [p. 15]) has seen fit to do so, she is not only a *femina*, but also *gravissima* and *optima* as well (*Fam.* 15.7.1). In a second letter, Cicero salutes Marcellus' wife, Junia, like her mother-in-law, a *gravissima atque optima femina* (*Fam.* 15.8.1). In a note to Domitius Ahenobarbus, the orator conveys his respects to the recipient's mother: *optimam feminam tuique amantissimam* (*Fam.* 6.22.3); and in an effort to curry favour with M. Crassus, Cicero writes that the entire *civitas* is aware that he, Cicero, is *amicissimus* to Crassus and his wife, upon whom the orator bestows the epithet, *prasestantissima omnium feminarum* (*Fam.* 5.8.2).[17] Even political enmity did not preclude polite correspondence, as can be seen when the orator writes P. Vatinius,[18] singling out his wife as *feminam primariam* (*Fam.* 5.11.2) or when M. Antony, as tribune of the plebs, remembers *Tulliam tuam, feminam lectissimam* (*Att.* 10.8a.1).[19] In each of these examples, *femina* is a component of formal greeting.

Contrast the manner in which Cicero employs *mulier* to refer to the female members of his, Quintus' and Atticus' families.[20] Although *mulier* became almost synonymous with *uxor*,[21] Cicero clearly employs the word to denote not only wives, but also daughters and sisters as well; in other words, all the female members of one's family.[22] Males are termed *viri*, and the term, in relation to one's *mulieres*, connotes the inequality between the *paterfamilias* and his women. Cicero does not usually call his *mulieres* by name. His and Quintus' sons may be acknowledged as *Cicerones*, but their wives and daughters rate only

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[16] Adams (*supra*, n. 1) 235.

[17] Identification with the upper classes is also evident when Cicero employs *femina* of female Spartiates who trained in athletics. R. Sealey notes that the Spartiates were the privileged class in Lacedaimon, *A History of the Greek City States, ca. 700-338 B.C.* (Berkeley, 1976) 67-68. Cic. *Tusc.* 2.36. *Femina* is appropriate for the elite Spartan women. Adams (*supra*, n. 1) 242, cites this and *Cluent.* 199 (*v. infra*, 43) as the only instances of *femina* as a significator of gender in pre-Augustan comedy or prose. He is mistaken. Cicero speculates upon the amount of property that may be owned by a *femina* (*Rep.* 3.17); the word clearly pertains to the upper classes, rather than to women in general. The example in *Pro Cluentio* also connotes women of moral superiority.

[18] Vatinius is singled out with *homo* and choice pejoratives in *Vat.* 10; 21; *Sest.* 134; 135; *Q.F.* 2.4.1.

[19] Cicero is less forgiving of the female relatives of P. Clodius, *v. infra*, pp. 43, 46.

[20] Cic. *Att.* 3.19.2; 4.19.1; 5.1.3; 6.6.1; 7.13a.3; 7.14.3; 17.5.2; 18.1; 20.2; 23.2; 13.22.4; *Fam.* 14.4.3 ; *Q.F.* 1.3.3.

[21] Adams (*supra*, n. 1) 234.

[22] *De mulieribus nostris, in quibus est tua soror...* (*Att.* 7.14.3.).

anonymous mention: e.g., *mulieres et Cicerones in Formiano reliqui* (*Att.* 7.20.2; cf. 7.18.1). The orator, however, employs the respectful term *femina* when writing Terentia in reference to ladies of her station who have gone to Rome: *...vestri similes feminae sintne Romae* (*Fam.* 14.14.1). *Mulier*, when used of members of the family, is an informal term, employed only among one's closest friends and relatives. *Femina*, on the other hand, is formal, as in Cicero's letters to his political associates.

The Oratorical Femina

Cicero uses *femina* rarely and effectively in his orations where the word is meant to emphasize the qualities of excellence associated, as a matter of course, with the aristocracy. The word is also used to establish respectability or else to garner sympathy for a friendly witness. It is occasionally employed as a combination of all of these aspects.

Cicero sometimes cites great *feminae* of the past who exemplify aristocratic virtues, such as Quinta Claudia, *femina...quae matronarum castissima putabatur* (*Har. Resp.* 27), who with the *vir optimus* P. Scipio welcomed *Magna Mater* in 206 B.C. Another paragon of feminine perfection is Caecilia, daughter of Q. Caecilius Metellus Balearicus, whose *virtus* is on a par with the male members of her family. Caecilia is a *spectatissima femina* (*Sex. Rosc.* 147):

> quae cum patrem clarissimum, amplissimos patruos, ornatissimum fratrem haberet, tamen, cum esset mulier, virtute perfecit, ut, quanto honore ipsa ex illorum dignitate adficeretur, non minora illis ornamenta ex sua laude redderet.

Mulier in the passage, refers to the ordinary woman, and the concessive clause *cum esset mulier* implies secondary status of the sex. Caecilia, however, has surmounted her biological impediment, and *spectatissima femina* is a laudatory epithet, appropriate to a woman who has risen above the average in *virtus.*

The State and its welfare come before family considerations in the mind of a *femina.* Thus Julia—the sister of L. Caesar (*vir fortissimus et amantissimus rei publicae*) who backed Cicero on the issue of the death penalty—is a *femina lectissima.* With apparent stoic fortitude, she has accepted her brother's recommendation that her husband be put to death. She is therefore one who will sacrifice those dearest to her to *Res Publica* in its hour of need. Hers is an *exemplum* to be emulated. The episode furthermore suggests to the listening senators that if a *vir fortissimus* and a *femina lectissima* are willing to make such unselfish concessions, so

should each one of them and their wives and daughters be; it also implies approval for Cicero's actions in the highest circles (*Cat.* 4.13).

A *femina* must serve as an example for all *mulieres*, as Cicero indicates in his treatise, *De Legibus* (2.29). Citing vestals tending the hearth, the orator in his role as philosopher exhorts *mulieres* to endure the chastity that is inherent in the nature of the *femina*. Whether *mulieres* refers to wives or to women in general, *pudicitia* is an aristocratic virtue that pertains to the *femina* who serves as the model for all *mulieres*.

Cicero employs *femina* of the vestal, Fonteia. The sister of M. Fonteius, a man of praetorian rank, she is granted the term by implication of her sacerdotal office as well as Cicero's need to make an undisguised play for the sympathy of the jurors. Noting that where *ceterae feminae* benefit from the protection of their homes as well as their *viri*, the orator maintains that Fonteia can claim only that of the vestal fire; and this is now in danger of being extinguished by the tears of her brother, an otherwise *vir fortissimus* (*Font.* 47; 48). Cicero panders shamelessly to his jurors' prejudices and feelings of maternal empathy as he demands to know if they will simply stand by while Idutiomarus, an Allobrogian Gaul, wrenches Fonteius from the very arms of his mother, a *lectissima miseraque femina*, while no one raises a hand (*Font.* 46). *Femina* in these examples is invested with all the connotations of the upper class feminine ideal:[23] the spurious portrait of the helpless tender of the domestic hearth, tirelessly spinning while her "better half" and defender is out fighting the battles of Republic or Empire. Such a representation was designed to arouse feelings of sympathy or outrage among the jury.[24] The latter is Cicero's intention when he informs the horrified (he hopes) Senate that *nobilissimae feminae* have exposed Clodius' *nefandum adulterium in pulvinaribus sanctissimis* (*Mil.* 72).

The widow Caesennia is a person of minimal social importance. Cicero refers to her with the general term *mulier* on various occasions (*Caecin.* 13; 15; 17). Yet, when he wants to prepare the jurors for her eventual victimization by a *mulierum assentator* (*Ib.* 14), Aebutius, he lauds her as *probatissima femina* (*Ib*, 10). *Femina*, connoting respect-

[23] M. Durry, *Éloge Funèbre d'une Matrone Romaine* (Paris, 1950) 169; S.B. Pomeroy writes of the totally idealized heritage of the aristocratic woman, based upon a social myth, which resulted in a tension between the real and the ideal. *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves* (N.Y., 1975) 149; cf. J.P. Hallett, "The role of women in Roman elegy: counter-cultural feminism," *Arethusa* 6 (1973) 103-4. Hallett, *Fathers and Daugters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family* (Princeton, 1984) chapter one.

[24] *Femina* is also employed for sympathy by Livy, Velleius, Pliny, Tacitus and Suetonius: *v. infra*, 85-86; 117-19; 120-21; 160-61; 171.

ability, calls attention to the faults of Aebutius, a *litigiosus* and *ineptus cognitor viduarum*, who is *stultus inter viros* and *inter mulieres peritus iuris et callidus* (*Ib.* 14).

Cicero employs similar methods in the *Verrine Orations*. Addressing Verres as *homo avarissime et spurcissime*, the orator demands to know why the ex-governor compels *pudentissimas lectissimasque feminas* to enter into *tantum virorum conventum* to testify unwillingly (*Verr.* 1.94)—the implication being that modesty would normally forbid them admittance. With adroit juxtaposition of ideas, Cicero has conjured up the image of defenseless and pure aristocratic *feminae*, who have been besmirched by a *homo spurcissimus*. In two other passages of the *Verrines*, Cicero uses *femina* with the adjective *primaria*. He employs the modifier only with *femina* and never with *mulier*. *Femina primaria* illustrates to the jurors the quality of gentry whom Verres has bilked.[25] It is significant that Cicero reserves the epithet for the undelivered second *actio*. In the first, he had the advantage of his physical presence and was able to modulate his voice for effect in order to influence the jury. In the second, however, he had to rely upon the written word to convey the proper impression. *Femina* with its connotations of aristocratic probity and helplessness will compel Cicero's senatorial readers to think in terms of the possible defrauding of their own wives and daughters. One can almost hear Cicero's voice quaking with indignation as he demands to know what little Annia's mother, a *femina primaria*—herself the daughter of a senator—could do to prevent that rat Verres from filching the inheritance of her fatherless child (*Verr.* 1.153; 2.21); or when Cicero announces that the rapacious governor has caused tax-collectors to foreclose upon the harvest of a consular's wife, a *femina primaria*, at her homestead in Leontini (*Verr.* 3.97). According to Nisbet, the second *actio* is "verbose and unreal," and Cicero used it to pull out all the rhetorical stops.[26] Verres' crimes against *feminae primariae* seem particularly heinous, considering that all the other women in the orations are *mulieres*, and most of them no better than they should be (*v. infra*, pp. 38-40).

Cicero exploits *femina* for sympathy in the *Philippics* when he designates Antony's first wife and cousin, Antonia, *pudicissimam feminam*.

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[25] *Femina primaria*: *Verr.* 1.153; 2.24; 3.97; *vir primarius*: *Verr.* 1.14; 67; 135; 157; 2.20; 81; 102; 149; 3.18; 122; 136; 152; 4.33; 46; 5.120; (*v. supra*, chapter one, pp. 11-12); cf. *Q. Rosc.* 19; *Tull.* 1; *Flacc.* 46; 50; 68; *Font.* 18; *Muren.* 73. *Primarius* is used only with *vir*.

[26] R.G.M. Nisbet, "The speeches," in *Studies in Latin Literature and its Influence: Cicero*, ed. T.A. Dorey (London, 1965) 53-56.

By noting that the *triumvir* turned her out of the villa in favour of the adventuress Fulvia, the orator not only places Antonia in a sympathetic light, but he also adumbrates Fulvia's character and casts Antony in the role of heartless villain (*Phil.* 2.99).[27]

Femina allows Cicero to assume an indignant stance with Antony after the latter has cast aspersions upon the rural background of Octavian's mother. Noting that the father *sanctissimae feminae atque optimae* was M. Attius Balbus, *in primis honestis, praetorius* (3.16), he demands to know why, if Antony disapproves of a wife from Aricia, he himself has taken one from Tusculum (The two are about five miles apart.). Cicero then reminds his adversary that *clarissimi viri*, such as L. Philippus and C. Marcellus, have wives from Aricia, and that neither of them have any reason to be ashamed *dignitatis optimarum feminarum* (3.17).

According to Adams, *femina* preserved its honourable overtones throughout Latin literature.[28] Because of its inherent sense of esteem and respectability, Cicero was able to exploit the word fully in his orations.

The Municipal Mulier

There are probably more women in the *Verrine Orations* than in all of Cicero's other speeches combined. Most are anonymous provincials who have either been victimized by Verres, or have been his partners in vice and crime. With few exceptions, all are from Sicily. As Cicero designated their male counterparts *homines*, so he specifies the females *mulieres*. It will be recalled that *homo* was not necessarily pejorative, but rather the accepted term for foreigners; the same principle applies to *mulier*. The Verrine orations are proliferated with *mulieres* from the outposts of the Mediterranean world.[29] Thus we discover several *mulieres nobiles*. *Mulier nobilis* parallels *homo nobilis*, employed by the orator for provincials. It is yet another demonstration of Roman snobbery toward members of the municipalities and foreigners.

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[27] Its aristocratic connotations of moral excellence allow Cicero to use *femina* ironically, upon occasion, as he does for Fulvia and Clodia, *v. infra*, 40-46.

[28] Adams (*supra*, n. 1) 235.

[29] One from Segesta, *m. perdives et nobilis* (*Verr.* 4.59); wife of the Syracusan Cleomenes, a *m. nobilis* (5.31); priestesses of Ceres, *probatae ac nobiles mulieres* (4.99); and Cicero fears lest he offend *mulieres nobiles formosaeque* (4.136). *Mulier* is often used with an adjective of place. Other than reflecting the usual Roman ethnic prejudices, the term is not necessarily pejorative.Persian *mulier: Verr.* 3.76; Greek: 1.66; 67; Sicilian: 1.120; 140; 4.52; Lampsacene: 1.63; 64; Syracusan: 2.53; 3.77; 4.136; 5.30; 31; 81; Segestan: 4.59; 76; 5.77; Catanian: 4.99; cf. *Fin.* 2.58, for a *mulier* from Norcia.

The Lower Class Mulier *and the* Mulier *of Ill-Repute*

Agonis is both *libertina* and a temple prostitute of Venus Erycina at Lilybaeum. She may be *copiosa* and *plane locuples*, but she is still a freedwoman, and therefore a *mulier* (*Div. Caec.* 55; 56; 57). A favorite assertion of Cicero's is that certain women are engaged in the trades. This gambit is intended to diminish their status in the minds of his jurors or reading public. At one point he relates that Lamia, a *mulier* who manages weavers, has outfitted Verres with custom-tailored purple robes (4.59). Even less respectable than tradespersons are actors, and Cicero repeatedly insists that Tertia, one of several glamorous *mulieres nobiles* (4.136), is the daughter of a mime (3.78; 83; 5.31; 81).

There is a precedent in Terence for applying *mulier* to women of the lower classes. The playwright uses it, often with pejoratives, for a collection of comic female characters who are largely prostitutes, midwives and crones. Even his *matronae* have not much to recommend them. Significantly, Terence employs *femina* just once, when Phormio asks the *senex* Demipho if he has no respect for his wife, a *femina primaria* (*Phorm.* 971).

Both Terence and Plautus employed *mulier* as a substantive for *meretrix*,[30] and it is clear that Cicero classifies many of his municipal *mulieres* in that category. They have patently failed the moral test, and therefore do not rate the respectful term, *femina*. It is no coincidence that these women are all witnesses for the defense; Cicero portrays them in the worst possible light, either emphasizing their low station or their moral unsuitability. Among them is Chelidon, a *mulier* and paramour of Verres; the uncrowned queen of Sicily, she has influenced the erstwhile governor's decisions by whispering her verdicts into his ear at trials over which he was presiding (1.120). According to Cicero, this *mulier* is so abandoned that L. Domitius refuses to mention her name in public (*Verr.* 1.140).[31]

Then there is the Syracusan Callidama, a *mulier* who kisses and tells (2.91), after whom (among others) Verres lusts (2.89); and Cicero is even more unsparing in his words of abuse for another Syracusan, Pipa,

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[30] Lodge (*supra*, n. 5) s.v. *mulier*, no. 7, *mulier meretrix*: *Mer.* 685; *St.* 746; *Men.* 261; 335; a variation on this is *mulier praestigiatrix*: *Am.* 782; P. McGlynn, *Lexicon Terentianum* (London, 1963) 354; s.v. *meretrix*; *mulier meretrix*: *And.* 755.

[31] Were Cicero aware of the blunt sexual usage of the Greek, *chelidon*, Domitius' refusal might represent Ciceronian humour. On *chelidon*, J.N. Adams, *Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (Baltimore, 1982) 82; cf., E. Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal* (London, 1980) 305.

de qua muliere versus plurimi...scribebantur—a *libidinosissima mulier* whose name Verres has turned into a household word (3.77; cf. 5.81). Pipa is, furthermore, a *decumana mulier* (*Ib.*), as well as a *muliercula publicana* (3.78). She, with her compeer, Tertia, is called a *deterrima muliercula* (3.79) and, in a variation on the same theme, a *mulier deterrima* (3.82). Both are married to notable Sicilians, but instead of remaining at home in the *gynacaeum*, as modest *feminae* should, they shamelessly preside over Verres' *convivia*—the only women present (5.81).

Bevies of *mulierculae*, said to be Verres' playgirls, are seemingly to be found in every port in Sicily. The diminutive form of *mulier*, when it does not imply physical or emotional weakness, indicates a disreputable character. [32]

Mulier, *a Term of Abuse*

As with *homo*, the general term *mulier*, appropriate for slaves, freedwomen, and members of the lower classes, is a term of vituperation. As with *homo*, the abusive potentiality of *mulier* can be demonstrated by the pejorative adjectives used with the latter that are never applied to *femina*. Although the list is shorter than that for *homo*, many of the derogatory modifiers are shared between the masculine and feminine terms. Cicero's catalogue of negative adjectives includes: *amens*, *avarissima*, *audax*, *crudelis*, *condemnata*, *damnata*, *decumana*, *furiosa*, *importuna*, *impudicissima*, *impura*, *ingeniosa*, *immoderata*, *irata*, *libidinosa*, *misera*, *nefaria*, *pecuniosa*, *potens*, *procax*, *proterva*, *publicana*, *quadrantaria*, and *taeterrima*. Significantly, all but one of these adjectives coupled with *mulier* appear in four works: *The Verrine Orations*, *Pro Cluentio*, *Pro Caelio*, and the *Philippics*. The first three are court cases, and it was as an attorney that Cicero most often came into conflict with women. In the last, Fulvia suffers from political fallout due to Cicero's enmity with her husband, Antony.

Cicero's technique against Fulvia deserves to be contrasted with that used against Sassia and Clodia, for with the first woman Cicero employs *femina* with positive adjectives in a sarcastic context, while with the others, he uses *mulier* with pejoratives exclusively. All three, however, have one theme that is common to their invective, for Cicero character-

[32] *J.S.T. Hannsen, Latin Diminutives: a Semantic Study* (Bergen, 1951) 9; cf. Opelt (*supra*, n. 14) 148.

izes each in terms of *turpis amor* and *intemperans libido*, worthy of a *meretrix*. *Meretrix* itself was a term of abuse in Ciceronian rhetoric, not necessarily based upon fact. A *meretrix* was *infamis*; consequently, her testimony would be discredited.[33] Sassia and Clodia are witnesses for the prosecution, and Cicero, the attorney for the defense, must necessarily call their credibility into question. In the case of Fulvia, her character must be assassinated in order to demonstrate, by association, the guilt of her husband.

Cicero's methods with Fulvia are more subtle than those employed against the others. For instance, he first introduces her as *bona femina*, but qualifies the "compliment" with the tagline, *quidem locuples certe*, and adds gratuitously that her father was a certain Bambalio, *homo nullo numero* (*Phil.* 3.16). Later, he does not mince words, and Fulvia is a *mulier...avarissima* (6.4), an adventuress, a well-born *meretrix* who, for gain, has had the bad judgment to marry in succession three of Cicero's political enemies: Clodius, Curio, and Antony.[34] Fulvia neither toiled, according to S.B. Pomeroy, nor did she spin. She did, however, wield political influence, and was, consequently, loathed by Cicero.[35]

Sassia and Clodia are *mulieres* whose portraits share related themes in respect to their invective. Cicero characterizes both as adulteresses who have seduced *adulescentes*; they carry out their schemes aided by slaves under cover of darkness; and both are implicated in the poisonings of persons who may have stood in the way of their libidinous purposes. Their portrayals illustrate *mulier* in conjunction with the rhetoric of the bacchanale, a device employed throughout Latin prose to defame by the combined implications of unnatural sexual appetite, murder and conspiracy, poisoning and witchcraft, and foreign superstition.[36]

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[33] T.A. Dorey, "Cicero, Clodia and the *Pro Caelio*," *G&R* ser. 2:6 (1959) 178, n. 3; cf. Opelt (*supra*, n. 14) 214-215.

[34] J.P.V.D. Balsdon observes: "What language other than obscene vituperation could Cicero employ in the description of a woman who had Clodius for her first husband and Antony for her last?" *Roman Women, their History and Habits* (London, 1962) 49.

[35] Pomeroy (*supra*, n. 23) 185.

[36] The orator of the *Ad Herennium* explains the *topos* of the adulteress-poisoner (4.16.23): a woman guilty of one crime was, at the same time, culpable of many. The orator states that a *mulier impudica* was also judged to be a *venefica*, since her body was given *turpissimae cupiditati*; thus she had to fear many people: her husband, her parents, and anyone else who had come in contact with her *dedecoris infamia*. Consequently, the *magnitudo peccati* drove her to kill; it likewise rendered her *timidam, intemperantia audacem*, and by the *natura mulieris inconsideratam*. Conversely, a *venefica* was considered *impudica* because her only possible motivation for committing such a crime was *turpis amor* and *intemperans ibido*: *tum cuius mulieris animus esset corruptus, eius corpus castum esse non putaverunt* (*Ib.*). The orator insists that the same principle does not apply to men: *Quia viros ad unum quodque maleficium singulae cupiditates impellunt, mulieris ad omnia maleficia cupiditas una ducit.*

Cicero paints a garish portrait of Sassia. Using images of animalism and fire, the orator brands her a *mulier importuna* whose *nefaria libido* is *non solum dedecore, verum etiam scelere coniuncta* (*Cluent.* 12). She treats her own son with *odium* and *crudelitas*; her crimes are *immanes*.[37] Sassia's passion for the *adulescens* Melinus is *contra fas*. Like an animal, she is *amore capta*; her desires, which cannot be contained, burst into flames.[38] The word *mulier* runs thematically throughout the invective (*Cluent.* 15):

> O mulieris scelus incredibile et praeter hanc unam in omni vita inauditum! O libidinem effrenatam et indomitam! O audaciam singularem!...Perfregit ac prostravit omnia cupiditate ac furore: vicit pudorem libido, timorem audacia, rationem amentia.

Sassia's unnatural appetites foreshadow her brutality. *Incensa odio*, the *mulier crudelissima* presides over the torture of her slave Nicostratus (181); with the relish of a Maenad, the *mulier amens* orders that the tongue of her thrall Strato be ripped out and that he be riveted to a cross (187), a crime Cicero insists she has committed *furore* (191); a delict which insinuations about her sexual relations with the slave make all the more hideous (184). Cicero does not omit to imply that the *mulier*, as accomplice to her third husband, Oppianicus—*homo tam audax, tam nefarius, tam nocens* (42)—has even attempted to poison her own son, Cluentius (189):

> non est perfecto de illo veneno celata mater; nihil est ab Oppianico sine consilio mulieris cogitatum.

Sassia is a filthy presence whose polluted footsteps must be expiated

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H. Caplan notes similar sentiments in Seneca (*Contr.* 7.3 (18).6) and Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 5.11.39), demonstrating the persistency of the *topos*. [Cicero] *Ad C. Herennium de ratione dicendi*, ed. & tr. by H. Caplan, *LCL* (London, 1954) 286. Many of the *maiestas* trials recorded in Tacitus' *Annales* reflect the combined notions of the woman as adulteress, poisoner and/or witch (*peregrina superstitio*): e.g. Aemilia Lepida (*Ann.* 3.22); Claudia Pulchra (*Ann.* 4.52); Numantina (*Ann.* 4.22); cited in E. Massoneau, *La Magie dans l'Antiquité Romain* (Paris, 1934) 177 sq. Adultery and poisoning are implied in the case of Livilla (*Ann.* 4.3; 10), and also number with witchcraft among the charges trumped up by Nero against Octavia (Zon.11.12. p. 39, 12-20). Quintilian credits the *topos* to Cato the Elder: *Si causam veneficii dicat adultera, non M. Catonis iudicio damnata videatur, qui nullam adulteram non eandem esse veneficam dixit*? (*Inst. Orat.* 5.11.39). The adulteress, poisoner, witch/foreign cultist, fit neatly into Bacchanalian rhetoric.

[37] Cicero reserves *importunus*, *nefarius*, *crudelis* and *immanis* for beasts and M. Antony. Merguet (*supra*, n. 2) s.v. *belva*. Opelt associates animal imagery with the language of the criminal (*supra*, n. 14) 144.

[38] deinde ita flagrare coepit amentia, sic inflammata ferri libidine, ut eam non pudor, non pudicitia, non pietas...a cupiditate revocaret (*Cluent.* 12).

Contra fas, *adulescens*, *amentia* and flaming *libido*, upon which Cicero harps, belong to the lexicon of the Bacchanalia. See Livy 39.8.6-8; 13.10-13. *v. infra*, n. 39.

(193). Like a gorgon, her very glance transfixes any who behold it, prompting innkeepers to slam their doors in her face; in consequence, she must frequent lonely alleys in the dark (193). Most significantly, Sassia practices *nocturna sacrificia* (194).[39] Ungovernable ardor by older women for *adulescentes* and *servi*, the coercion of witnesses for purposes of false testimony, torture, poisoning, murders, *superstitio*, gorgons, and clandestine nocturnal sacrifices are prime elements of the bacchic cult which, even though it had been stamped out in 186 B.C., nevertheless, bequeathed a rich legacy of rhetoric. There are even forged wills (41). The only element lacking is the *vinum*—perhaps because Sassia could not gain admittance to the taverns.

Cicero employs *mulier* with pejorative adjectives for Sassia more than for any other of his feminine adversaries.[40] In fact, he notes that *caeca crudelitas*, *scelus*, *turpitudo*, and *cupiditas* have so stained the honor of her family that she is too depraved to be called a *femina* (*Cluent.* 199). This statement confirms Cicero's recognition that the word *femina* embodied certain virtues, and that the title should be witheld from females who have not lived up to them.

The iteration of *mulier* with its plethora of pejoratives in *Pro Cluentio*, is in converse ratio to the strength of Cicero's case, which is said to have been weak.[41] Consequently, the orator's task was to convince the jury that Sassia was an unnatural parent.[42] This he has done, in part, by calling her a *mulier* in contexts of Bacchanalian rhetoric and combinations of modifiers that recall beasts, tyrants, gladiators, pirates, and the criminally insane. The proliferation of such adjectives tinges Sassia's portrait in sanguinary hues which suggest, on the one hand, bloodthirsty premeditation, and on the other, a dog gone mad.

Cicero uses similar themes for Clodia Pulchra in the *Pro Caelio*. Like Sassia, Clodia is a *mulier* whose rampageous *libidines* must be satisfied by an *adulescens* (*Cael.* 50; 70). Since Clodia is charging M. Caelius with poisoning, Cicero uses the nocturnal poisoner *topos* as a *translatio*

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[39] Cicero rages against *nocturna mulierum sacrificia* in *De Legibus* (2.21; 35); cf. *Cluent.* 194:

> Quin etiam nocturna sacrificia, quae putat occultiora esse, sceleratasque eius preces et nefaria vota cognovimus; quibus illa etiam deos immortales de suo scelere testatur neque intellegit pietate et religione et iustis precibus deorum mentes, non contaminata superstitione neque ad scelus perficiendum caesis hostiis posse placari. Cuius ego furorem atque crudelitatem deos immortales a suis aris atque templis aspernatos esse confido.

[40] *mulier amens* (*Cluent.* 187); *m. audax* (18); *m.crude*lis (18;177; 181); *m.furiosa* (182); *m. importuna* (12; 177); *m. nefaria* (176; 185); *m. pecuniosa* (18).

[41] Quintilian (*Inst.* 2.17.21); Nisbet (*supra*, n. 26) 59-60.

[42] *Ibid.*, 59.

criminis (*Herenn.* 1.14.24) in order to shift the blame from Caelius, insinuating that Clodia dispatched her late husband, Q. Metellus Celer, with a fast-acting drug: *ex hac igitur domo progressa ista mulier de veneni celeritate dicere audebit* (*Cael.* 60).[43]

Cicero's tactics with Clodia differ from those used for Sassia; the adjectives applied to *mulier* have no connotations of cruelty. Rather Clodia is the shameless hussy, whose affairs are carried on for all to see at Baiae beach *convivia* (*Cael.* 47):

> Nihilne igitur illa vicinitas redolet, nihilne hominum fama, nihil Baiae denique ipsae loquantur? Illae vero non loquuntur solum, verum etiam personant, huc unius mulieris libidinem esse prolapsam, ut ea non modo solitudinem ac tenebras atque haec flagitiorum integumenta non quaerat, sed in turpissimis rebus frequentissima celebritate et clarissima luce laetetur.

Clodia is wayward and impetuous, as one can see from the epithets: *proterva meretrix procaxque* (49); *immoderata mulier* (53); *temeraria, procax, irata mulier* (55). Geffcken remarks that Cicero indulges in obscene humour and exaggeration followed by degradation, as in *mulier potens quadrantaria*, a term which suggests that the rich and powerful Clodia's favours can be obtained at a cut rate. As Geffcken writes, Cicero delights in portraying Clodia as the lady of the *domus* who is always having open house.[44]

Cicero hisses *ista mulier* at Clodia repeatedly in the speech.[45] Significantly, the orator employs *femina* only twice: once when great Appius' ghost compares her behaviour to that of the illustrious *feminae* of the *gens Claudia* (*Cael.* 34); and in a passage that drips with sarcasm, as Cicero terms Clodia's gang of bathtub desperados *viri boni* who are *talis feminae familiares* (*Cael.* 63). The irony of this remark is emphasized by the fact that Clodia is referred to as a *mulier* more than two dozen times in pejorative contexts throughout the oration.

As with Cluentius, Cicero had another dubious client on his hands;[46] and when one is defending someone who is demonstrably guilty, Bacchanalian rhetoric is a sure ploy that will distract the jurors. Cicero therefore relies upon the *topos* of the older *non nupta mulier*—in reality a *meretrix*—who, applying *blandimenta*, lures *adulescentes* into her *domus*, which Cicero, according to Geffcken, portrays as a "place of

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[43] On word-play upon Metellus' *cognomen*, Celer: *M. Tulli Ciceronis Pro M. Caelio Oratio*, ed., R.G. Austin (Oxford, 1933-64) 121, n. 27.

[44] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 5) 32; 37.

[45] Cic. *Cael.* 32; 38; 56; 60; 67.

[46] G. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton, 1972) 199. cf. Geffcken (*supra*, n. 5) 9.

darkness, secrets, plotting and poisoning;" where "slaves are not slaves" but "co-voluptuaries and conspirators" (*Cael.* 49).[47]

Geffcken has demonstrated that Cicero, in a "Roman Holiday" spirit, uses comic techniques to ridicule and degrade Clodia.[48] She furthermore notes patterns which she likens to Plautine comedy.[49] In particular, she cites Cicero's resurrection of Appius Claudius, who addresses Clodia in the *persona* of the old-fashioned and severe *senex*.[50] Note Cicero's use of *mulier* in the vocative, the typical form of rude address in Plautus (*Cael.* 34):

> Mulier, quid tibi cum Caelio, quid cum homine adulescentulo, quid cum alieno?

The *topos* of the older married woman dallying with the impressionable *adulescens* is, indeed, straight out of Plautus, who connects such behaviour with practitioners of Bacchic rites. Young Pistoclerus suspects two *germanae meretrices* of being bacchantes whose intentions toward him are strictly dishonorable: *Quia Bacchis, bacchas metuo et bacchanal tuom* (Plaut. *Ba.* 53). The boy is certain they are animals who will entice him into their shadow-ridden lair (*Ib.* 55-56):

> Magis illectum tuom quam lectum metuo, mala tu's bestia. nam huic aetati non conducit, mulier, latebrosus locus.

Pistoclerus also remarks that *nox*, *mulier* and *vinum* exert a fatal appeal upon an adolescent boy (*Ib.* 88). Plautus' bacchic *mulieres*, who are never *feminae*,[51] ply the boy with *blanditiis*, which the author likens to birdlime (*Ib.* 48-52).

Here we have the vocabulary of *coniuratio*; this combination of words and ideas must be recognized for what it is, a weapon of character assassination.[52] The *topos* was used by Cicero with *mulier*, of Sassia and Clodia, and with *homo* of Piso, Catiline, Clodius and Antony.[53] The

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[47] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 5) 33.

[48] *Ibid.* 3-7.

[49] *Ibid.* 3.

[50] *Ibid.* 17-18.

[51] Lodge (*supra*, n. 5) s.v. *femina*; *mulier*: *Ba.* 41; 52; 56; 88; 92; 472; 478; 489; 838; 843; 845; 851; 891; 1161.

[52] Bacchanalian rhetoric is used throughout Latin literature as an element of innuendo, slander, and parody: by Sallust of the Catilinarians; by Velleius of Antony and Cleopatra v. *infra*, 117; overtly by Tacitus of Messalina, and by innuendo, of Poppaea and Agrippina. *v. infra*, 134; Petronius and Apuleius parody the *topos*, *v. infra*, 179-80.

[53] Although such rhetoric harks back to Euripides, the Latin version may well stem from the official Senatorial propaganda against the Bacchic cult from Plautus' own day, since comedy must use a comprehensible frame of reference to which its audience can relate. Hanson (*supra*, n. 10) 51.

reader, who is being treated to a rhetorical *topos* rather than a true portrait, should treat this medley of themes with cautious skepticism.[54]

As Geffcken notes, the ultimate purpose of invective in oratory is to destroy one's opponent, using every available verbal weapon, including "ridicule, parody, caricature, [and] burlesque."[55] At the outset of *Pro Caelio*, Cicero states that he intends to squelch *libidinem muliebrem* (*Cael.* 1). The iteration of *mulier* with pejorative adjectives acts as a refrain in which the word *mulier* itself becomes identified with that vice. By continuous repetition, Cicero has successfully converted the neutral *mulier* into a term of abuse.

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[54] This cannot be stressed enough! Much nonsense has been written by respectable scholars upon the nature of women, their evaluations being based upon *topoi*. An example is Balsdon's insensitive interpretations of Clodia and Sempronia which swallow Ciceronian and Sallustian rhetoric hook, line, and sinker (*supra*, n. 34) 55:

> Clodia was a consul's widow; Sempronia was an ex-consul's wife. They were both rebels against the staid limitations of conventional society, seeking amusement and stimulation where it was to be found.They took risks and lived dangerously. Anything to escape the boredom of respectability.

Statements that Clodia was "38 and losing her hold", and that Sempronia was "even older still," (*Ib.*) tell us more about Mr. Balsdon than they do about either of these women. He further notes that after the Caelius affair Clodia is never heard of again. This is probably because Cicero's time was otherwise occupied by going into exile and fighting for his political career. Such remarks in Balsdon's book, with its condescending title (i.e....*Their History and Habits*) do little to further scholarship on Roman women. Although Pomeroy recognizes the propaganda element in the portraits of Fulvia, Octavia and Cleopatra arising from sources hostile to Antony (*supra*, n. 23) 185, she fails to discern a similar tradition behind Sallust's portrait of Sempronia, citing her "sexual liberty", p. 171. Syme writes of the "arrogant and criminal females" of the Julio-Claudians, in "Princesses and others in Tacitus," *G&R* ser. 2, 28:1 (1981) 41. Their arrogance and criminality has been portrayed with the same bacchanalian brush, only more artfully, by Tacitus.

[55] Geffcken (*supra*, n. 5) 66.

CHAPTER THREE

SALLUST: FACTIONAL POLITICS THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

Masculine Terminology: The War with Jugurtha

Virtus is its own reward, according to Sallust.[1] It is achieved by deeds in service of the Republic. With this latter sentiment, Cicero would totally agree. Where Sallust diverges from the orator is in the interpretation of the methods used to acquire *virtus*. *Ambitio* and *dominatio* are the historian's bugaboos, and Cicero, from the point of view of the non-*boni*, could be said to be guilty of both of them.[2] According to D.C. Earl, Sallust, a "disillusioned *popularis*", expressed himself in the traditional political terminology of his era,[3] an age usually thought of as Ciceronian, thanks to the orator's literary inundation of reading posterity.[4] Sallust employs that terminology, however, from another perspective, and his viewpoint, often at odds with that of Cicero, might be regarded as a sort of mirror image. This is apparent in his use of male gender terms: often a Ciceronian *vir* will be rendered a Sallustian *homo*, and, conversely, a Ciceronian *homo* will be converted into a Sallustian *vir* (*v. infra*, pp. 49; 56).

It would be a mistake, however, to regard Sallust as a mere *popularis* hack, regurgitating a "party-line"—that is, if those restless alliances that opposed the *dominatio* of the established nobility could ever be said to have had such.[5] As Syme has written, "Sallust is, at the same time, an artist, a politician, and a moralist, the elements so fused and combined that he seems all of one piece."[6] Sometimes dismissed by scholars as a political pamphleteer,[7] Sallust wrote history in what he firmly believed

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[1] D.C. Earl, *Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge, 1961) 111; cf. L.R. Lind, "Concept and character: the reasons for Rome's greatness," *TAPA* 103 (1972) 248.

[2] Earl (*supra*, n.1) 114; *ambitio* was the antithesis of *virtus* in Roman thought: Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome* (Ithaca, 1967) 33-34.

[3] Earl (*supra*, n. 1) 112.

[4] R. Syme, *Sallust* (Berkeley, 1964) 84.

[5] R. Seager, "Cicero and the word, *popularis*," *CQ* N.S. 22 (1972) 338.

[6] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 2.

[7] *Ibid*., *loc. cit*.; T.F. Carney, *A Biography of Marius* (Chicago, 1970) 75.

to be the Thucydidean tradition.[8] Syme, in fact, places him between Thucydides and Tacitus, as far as historical tradition is concerned.[9] Sallust was, furthermore, regarded by the ancients as one of the foremost historians of his day.[10] His use of masculine terminology indicates his seriousness of purpose, for he placed the terms *vir* and *homo* in the mouths of his characters—be they *boni, populares, improbi*, or foreigners—as they themselves would have uttered them.[11] Although Syme believes that Sallust eschews Ciceronianisms,[12] Sallustian orations nevertheless preserve Roman rhetorical traditions, some of which are apparent in his employment of *vir* and *homo*.

Sallust's masculine terminology can be separated into two categories: that which is part of his narrative, and that which belongs to his reported orations. Although most entries fall into the latter group, or in the character sketches which introduce the speeches (*v. infra*, p. 51), there are numerous instances pertaining to the former. For instance, early in the *Jugurthine War*, Sallust introduces his readers to several *homines* who are paragons of oligarchical venality. The first is M. Aemilius Scaurus, *homo nobilis*. The term is not complimentary, as the rest of the sentence reveals: *homo nobilis impiger factiosus, avidus potentiae honoris divitiarum, ceterum vitia sua callide occultans* (*BJ* 15.4).[13]

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[8] T.F. Scanlon maintains that Sallust composed both his orations and their introductory remarks in emulation of Thucydides, a fact cited by the elder Seneca (*Contr.* 9.1.13) and Velleius Paterculus (2.36.2). Scanlon further notes that Sallust's characterizations "embrace the same psychological and political criteria of Thucydides." *The Influence of Thucydides on Sallust* (Heidelberg, 1980) 86-88; Sallust's introductory remarks and set speeches employ *vir* and *homo* as rhetorical components that contribute to the delineation of character. Thucydides' introductory remarks used *aner* with positive adjectives and, in one case only, *anthropos* with pejoratives. Archidamus is the equivalent of *vir sapiens et prudens*: *aner dokon kai sophon* (Thuc. 1.79.2): Pericles is the *fortissimus vir*: *dunatotatos* (1.127.3); Brasidas, *aner dikaion kai metrion* (4.81.1-2); and Hermocrates is *aner...kata ton polemon emperia* (6.72.2); Hyperbolus, however, is the equivalent of the Ciceronian *homo adflictus* (*Phil.* 3.25), *mochthros anthropos* (8.73.3). It would seem that the Greek historian used free birth and citizenship (either Athenian or Spartiate) as a criterion for *aner*, and the lack thereof for *anthropos*, when the terms are used in apposition. He uses *anthropos* of an unnamed accomplice of an assassin, an *Argeios anthropos* (8.92.2). Demosthenes' use of *aner* with positive adjectives and *hanthropos* with pejoratives (*supra*, chapter one) seems to corroborate the notion that there were set conventions regarding gender terms in Greek as well as Latin, and that Roman usage may have been predicated upon Greek rhetorical precedents.

[9] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 256.

[10] *Ibid.*, 289.

[11] Sallust's speeches as thinly disguised character sketches in emulation of Thucydides: Scanlon (*supra*, n. 8) 90.

[12] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 294.

[13] A trait shared with Q. Curius, Fulvia's Catilnarian lover, another *homo* (*BC* 23.2). As noted above (chapter one, n. 48) *nobilis*, according to Lacey, is not a political compliment; therefore, neither is *homo nobilis*.

Scaurus' portrait is said to be negative throughout,[14] perhaps reflecting Sallust's contempt for a man who had to scramble for power like a *novus homo*.[15] Of similar ilk is L. Calpurnius Bestia, a consul who recruits *homines novos factiosos* to cover up any peccadillos he might commit in the course of his campaign against Jugurtha (28.4). Sallust's readers will not be surprised when a magistrate, who employs such dubious aids, brings back a dishonourable peace treaty[16] and meets a bad end at the hands of the Mamilian commission, a *quaestio extraordinaria*, from which L. Opimius, *homo clarus*, receives a sentence of death (*BJ* 16.2).[17] E. Koestermann observes that *homo clarus* seems to be a tribute, but he also cites the negative tag-line *et tum in senatu potens, quia consul C. Graccho et M. Fulvio Flacco interfectis acerrume victoriam nobilitatis in plebem exercuerat*.[18] Opimius has displayed characteristics similar to those of Bestia (28.5);[19] he represents that which Sallust, himself a former tribune of the plebs, considers a pernicious clique of *nobiles* at the root of the State's problems. Had Sallust any regard for Opimius, Bestia or Scaurus, they would be *viri*, as they are in Cicero. Scaurus, according to the orator, was a *singularis vir* (*Fam.* 1.9.16); Bestia, a *vir acer et non indisertus*, who met a sad end in his consulship (*Brut.* 128);[20] and Cicero considered Opimius a *fortissimus vir* who saved the State (*Mil.* 82; 84).[21] Sallust's and Cicero's divergent approaches demonstrate the use of *homo* and *vir* in the framework of factional opposites.

Sallust repeatedly employs *homo nobilis* in pejorative contexts. For instance, when the Numidian, Bomilcar, wishes to destroy Jugurtha, he suborns the pusillanimous and cowardly Nabdalsa, *hominem nobilem, magnis opibus, clarum acceptumque popularibus suis* (*BJ* 70.2), to break *fides* with the king and hand him over to Caecilius Metellus for cash (*BJ* 71.3). On another occasion, envoys urge Metellus to restrain Hamilcar, *hominem nobilem factiosum*, who is plotting insurrection (*BJ*

[14] *C. Sallustius Crispus Bellum Jugurthinum*, erläutert und mit einer Einleitung versehen von Erich Koestermann (Heidelberg, 1971) 83.

[15] *E.S. Gruen, Roman Politics in the Criminal Courts* (Harvard,1968) 118; cf. Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 165. As a member of the *boni* in good standing Scaurus should have been above such ignoble strivings.

[16] Gruen writes that Bestia "marched off to Numidia with a reputation for valor" but "returned with only a treaty for peace."

[17] *BJ* 40.4-5; Gruen *loc. cit.*; cf. Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 167.

[18] Koestermann (*supra*, n. 14) 85.

[19] *Ibid.*, 145.

[20] Cited by Gruen (*supra*, n. 15) 145.

[21] *v. supra*, chapter one, p. 15.

[22] Koestermann notes the asyndeton in *homo nobilis factiosus* which seems to be peculiar to Sallust (*supra*, n. 14) 118.

Nabdalsa and Hamilcar are thoroughly reprehensible characters, and *homo nobilis* (rather than *vir*), used of each, contributes to the pejorative picture.

The epithet is also employed of M. Licinius Crassus, who as a wealthy consular would normally be termed a *vir*. The *homo nobilis* puts in a dubious appearance in the Catilinarian conspiracy (*BC* 48.5). Although K. Vretska sees the epithet as laudatory, equating it with *vornehm*,[23] issue must be taken in light of the historian's other uses of the term. Furthermore, Sallust presents the epithet as a part of gossip—spread, according to Crassus, by Cicero—implicating the millionaire in the conspiracy. Noting that some senators could not credit that a *hominem nobilem, maxumis divitiis, summa potentia* could be involved in the affair, Sallust adds that many others believed the report, but did not wish to tangle with a man of Crassus' power (*BC* 48.5-9). Juxtaposition of ideas is a device of innuendo.[24] While *homo nobilis*—an epithet used by Cicero of second-rate municipal aristocrats[25]—combined with *potentia*, may reflect the doubts being expressed about Crassus' part in the conspiracy, it may also represent Sallust's own opinion of the millionaire's complicity in the affair.[26]

Sallust has entwined the portraits of his *homines nobiles* with a common thread of *factio* and *potentia*, pernicious attributes of the arrogant nobility, which the historian, in a burst of Thucydidean omniscience, sees to have led to the Civil War which brought down the Republic.[27] Sallust's characters fall into the tradition of Roman historiography that was to be exemplified by Livy, in that they are the embodiments of moral qualities; and Bestia, Scaurus and the other *homines nobiles* are said to be personifications of civil strife.[28] *Factio*

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[23] *C. Sallustius Crispus De Catilinae Coniuratione*, kommentiert von Karl Vretska (Heidelberg, 1976) 486. Even though the Crassus *gens* had had consular status for over a century, Vretska sees Crassus to be a Marcus-come-lately and not a real member of the narrow clique of *nobiles*.

[24] I.S. Ryberg, "Tacitus' art of innuendo," *TAPA* 73 (1942) 390.

[25] Cicero sometimes called Crassus a *fortissimus vir* (*Sest.* 39; 48; *Verr.* 5.5), but not in the Catilinarian speeches.

[26] On *homo nobilis*, *v. supra*, n. 13.

[27] Gruen maintains that the Civil War caused the end of the Republic, and not vice versa, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley, 1974) 504. While Sallust acknowledges that the power struggle among the nobility had ravaged social and political institutions, he seems to imply a post-war desolation in which accepted governmental institutions were demolished (*BJ* 5.2). Faction and a struggle for power which brought about the downfall of nations is a Thucydidean *topos* which Sallust has adapted: Scanlon (*supra*, n. 8) 20.

[28] Scanlon (*supra*, n. 8) 26.

and *potentia* are antithetical to *virtus*,[29] and the men who exhibit such characteristics are *homines*, not *viri*.

Characters such as Nabdalsa and Gauda, an apparent half-brother of Jugurtha, would probably be termed *homines* anyway, since they fall under the rubric of undistinguished foreigners.[30] Nevertheless, the pejorative context within which the epithets are set is undeniable. Notice how Sallust contrasts *homo* and *vir* in his portrayal of Gauda. Marius undermines Metellus' authority by playing upon the disgruntled vanity of the Numidian. He flatters the *hominem ob morbos animo parum valido*, and hails him as *regem, ingentem virum, Masinissae nepotem* (*BJ* 65.3). Once more, *homo* and *vir* are contrasted to the disadvantage of the former, and to the credit of the latter.

There is no question in Sallust's mind about the merits of the Romans, Q. Fabius Maximus and P. Cornelius Scipio. Both are *praeclari viri*, who lived in that pristine era of the second Punic War before Rome lost her *metus hostilis*.[31] Sallust tells us that the mere glimpse of their ancestors' *imagines* aroused these men to paroxysms of *virtus* (*BJ* 4.5). They are soldiers of old, the type that he lauds in the *War with Catiline* as *tales viri* (*BC* 7.5). In just a few lines about Fabius and Scipio, Sallust has provided his readers with a rich, albeit cameo, portrait of that virtually extinct species, the *vir* of yesteryear.[32] Sallust intended such "nut-shell" portrayals to foreshadow deeds of significant personages, and to set forth the major themes upon which he elaborates.[33] For instance, Sallust is an admirer of Q. Metellus Numidicus; Metellus is an *acer vir* (*BJ* 43.1), and, in what Syme sees to be the historian's greatest compliment, a *magnus* and *sapiens vir* (*BJ* 45.1).[34] Metellus seems all that a Roman *imperator* should be, intrepid, a superb tactician, and an old-fashioned disciplinarian who rehabilitates Postumius' demoralized army with just the right mixture of severity and moderation. Nevertheless, he is a nobleman, and,

[29] They are related to *ambitio* and desire for *regnum*; cf. Earl (*supra*, n. 1) 111-14.

[30] Such are the Latin allies in the Jugurthine war: *homines nominis Latini et socios Italicos* (*BJ* 40.2). Another Numidian, Dabar, a mediator between Bocchus and Sulla, is termed a *sanctus vir ex sententia ambobus* (*BJ* 109.4); while Koestermann accepts this, he cites another commentator who would like to delete the phrase as a gloss added at a later date, on the grounds that Dabar is described by Sallust as the son of a concubine (*BJ* 108.1). Dabar, very likely, qualifies as a *vir sanctus* because of his loyalty to Rome during wartime. Livy, it will be demonstrated, used a similar criterion to determine whether a foreigner was a *vir or a homo* (*v. infra*, chapter four).

[31] Earl (*supra*, n. 1) 116.

[32] Scanlon states that such character sketches ranged from the "briefest outline to the *quasi-funebris laudatio*" (*supra*, n. 8) 84.

[33] *Ibid.*, 86; 90.

[34] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 158.

according to Sallust, the nobility of these days simply does not compare to the nobility of those days; consequently, Metellus cannot resist subverting Numidian envoys, and he furthermore succumbs to ambition and jealousy and acts in a petty un-Roman manner towards Marius. Sallust's admiration seems to prevent Metellus from degenerating into a *homo*, although he comes close to doing so as he blubbers over Marius' election. Sallust qualifies his praise: Metellus is a *vir egregius in aliis artibus*, but *nimis molliter aegritudinem pati* (82.2-3).

Metellus and Jugurtha are *imperatores* and *summi viri* (*BJ* 52.1). *Vir* demonstrates both of them to be on an equal military footing—a formidable match for each other that individual personal failings cannot invalidate. Much of Jugurtha's character is revealed through the eyes of others,[35] and the employment of *vir* and *homo* is integral to Sallust's presentation of the perception of the Numidian's observers. The foremost of these is King Micipsa. At first pleased with his nephew's accomplishments, he gradually begins to worry that the *hominem adulescentem* is becoming too popular for the good of the realm (*BJ* 6.2). He cannot assassinate *talem virum* lest his death precipitate sedition (*BJ* 6.3). Micipsa realizes that *hominem tam acceptum popularibus* can be neither coerced nor gulled by ploys (*BJ* 7.1), so he sends Jugurtha off to Numantia in charge of the Numidian cavalry and hopes for the worst. The plot backfires, however, as Micipsa realizes when he receives a letter from Scipio Aemilianus, commending Jugurtha in the highest terms: *Habes virum dignum te atque avo suo Masinissa* (*BJ* 9.2). Consequently Micipsa decides it is in his interests to be impressed *cum virtute, tum gratia viri* [*Jugurthae*]; he therefore adopts him as co-heir with his two sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal (*BJ* 9.3). On his deathbed, the old king counsels them: *Colite, observate talem hunc virum [Jugurtham], imitamini virtutem et enitimini, ne ego meliores liberos sumpsisse videar quam genuisse* (*BJ* 10.8). The boys, however, do not heed the king's advice and are soon at each other's throats; and when Jugurtha has Hiempsal's slit, Adherbal sails for Rome, and denounces his step-brother, Jugurtha, to the Senate as *homo omnium quos terra sustinet sceleratissumus*, who, *contempto imperio vostro Masinissae me nepotem et iam ab stirpe socium atque amicum populi Romani regno fortunisque omnibus expulit* (*BJ* 14.2). The above summary sets forth the relative qualities of *vir* and *homo*, revealing the former as a laudatory term, and

[35] K. Buechner, *Sallust* (Heidelberg, 1982) 182.

the latter as a word of abuse. Understanding of the terms' nuances patently lends insight into Sallust's methods of characterization.

Sallust grants preliminary approval to Marius: at the outset of his career, Marius was *talis vir* that he did not attempt to seek the consulship; subsequently, however, the *novus homo* was prodded to do so by *ambitio* (*BJ* 63.6). One may infer from these statements that a great *vir* should be modest enough to resist the temptation of over-eagerness in the pursuit of high office; and also that *ambitio*, which Sallust detests, comes naturally to the *novus homo*. After Marius opens the army to the landless, Sallust remarks that when a *homo* is aspiring to power, the *egentissumi* and the *opportunissumi* are his greatest allies (*BJ* 86.3). *Homo* is not only the appropriate word for Marius, the aspiring politician, but, as Cicero demonstrated with *homo* and *popularis*, *homo* also associates Marius closely with the riffraff upon whom he is relying for support.

The gender terminology that Marius uses in reference to the nobility in his speech before the people is instructive. Syme informs us that the oration is "skillfully constructed," and "designed less to illustrate the situation than portray a character."[36] He also observes that Marius' purpose was to "harry the aristocracy,"[37] and according to K. Buechner, the speech is filled with factional invective against the ruling nobility.[38] Sallust employs *homo* and *vir* as Marius, himself, would have uttered the words.

The *novus* consul wastes no time in expressing his opinion of the senatorial clique. Marius urges the people to deliberate carefully before giving command of the war to one *ex illo globo nobilitatis*; before sending into battle *hominem veteris prosapiae ac multarum imaginum et nullius stipendi* (*BJ* 85.10). Marius then jeers at the *praeposteri homines* who have never bothered to read Greek and Roman history until after their election to the consulship, but who, nevertheless, expect to exercise intelligent foreign policy (*BJ* 85.12). Marius' own experience has been gained on the battlefield; he is proud to be a *novus homo*, and he notes *virtus* to be the only genuine nobility (*BJ* 85.13). The aristocracy are jealous *homines corrupti superbia* (*BJ* 85.19), and Marius wants no part of their trappings—money, *imagines*, or classical education. He brags that he has not the slightest interest in the study of Greek which, he scoffs, has done nothing to improve the *mores* of those who flout their

[36] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 168.
[37] *Ibid*, 169; cf. Scanlon (*supra*, n. 8) 91.
[38] Buechner (*supra*, n. 35) 196; Earl notes that *novi homines* customarily stood on the record of their own virtus when attacking the aristocracy (*supra* n. 2) 47.

educational superiority. He further notes that while their noble ancestors may have endowed them with a financial and cultural heritage, these *homines superbissumi* err in not seeking *virtus*, the one quality that cannot be passed on to them by inheritance (*BJ* 85.38).[39] Marius brings his anti-aristocratic diatribe to a climax by noting that his father and other *sancti viri* taught him as a little boy that refinements were suitable for women but hard work was the only fit doctrine for real men (*BJ* 85.40):

> munditias mulieribus, laborem viris convenire, omnibus bonis oportere plus gloriae quam divitiarum esse; arma non supellectilem decori esse.

Lambasting the nobility as a pack of carousers living on the paunch of their own gluttony, Marius employs a combination of words unique to contemporary invective: he chastises the nobles as TURPISSUMI VIRI! (*BJ* 85.42).

Now the combination of *turpissumi* and *viri* caused enough doubt in the mind of some monastic copyist to cause him to omit the latter word from the *Vatican Manuscript*.[40] It does not, however, seem to be a mistake, and is accepted in all the other MSS. Is *turpissumi viri* supposed to represent one of Marius' pleonasms, with which the speech is said to be loaded?[41] Or is Sallust deliberately depicting Marius as branding the aristocracy in their own terms with words that would be sweet to the ears of the listening plebs?

Since the speech is essentially Sallust's concoction, both hypotheses are possible. Nevertheless, Marius' words show him perfectly capable of handling *homo* and *vir* in the accepted rhetorical manner: he has blasted the aristocrats as *homines* with pejorative adjectives and has enshrined his father among the *sancti viri*. Furthermore, Marius' pose as a rustic lout is said to have been part of his political *persona*,[42] to which Sallust's presentation of the lengthiest oration in the work seems to testify. The historian may well be portraying the unscrupulous Marius using his rhetoric to pander to the *egentissumi* and *opportunissumi* elements of society (*BJ* 86.3). Marius' audience is the key. It will be recalled how Cicero changed his vocabulary when speaking before the

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[39] Nowhere in this speech does Marius mention Metellus, although Syme believes that the *novus homo*'s rival is implied (*supra*, n. 4) 168. Marius, however, has already blasted Metellus: *homo inanis et regiae superbiae imperio nimis gaudaret* (BJ 64.5).

[40] A.W. Bennett, *Index Verborum Sallustianus* (Hildesheim, 1977) s.v. *vir*.

[41] Buechner (*supra*, n. 35) 197; cf. Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 168: "archaic expressions reflect the ostensible plain man."

[42] Carney (*supra*, n. 7) passim.

people, transforming those perennial *homines populares*, the Gracchi, into *viri clarissimi*.[43] Plutarch tells us that Marius deliberately used insulting language against the Senate when addressing the populace (*Mar.* 9). The aristocratic term *viri*, coupled with *turpissumi*, leaves the politician's listeners no doubt about the identity of the recipients of his vituperation.

Sallust is preoccupied with the Thucydidean concept of the perversion of political vocabulary,[44] and by putting such a distorted epithet in Marius' mouth, he may be illustrating precisely how such political expressions could be twisted. Marius has tagged *vir*, a noun of honour usually associated with the nobility, with a pejorative adjective; one which, furthermore, is invariably used in contemporary oratory by high-born politicians in tandem with the generic noun, *homo*, precisely to degrade their opponents. Marius' words would not have been lost on his popular audience, who, Plutarch writes, delighted in hearing invective directed against the aristocracy; neither would they have been wasted upon those Senators whom Marius was deliberately insulting (*Mar.* 9); nor would the point be missed by the aristocracy of Sallust's day, for whom the message was ultimately intended. Syme tells us that Sallust was a writer of great subtlety.[45] Moreover, he was a man who was well-grounded in the factional political arts, having himself been, as he tells us, among the deserving *viri* unable to obtain a magistracy due to the political machinations of the undeserving in the ruling clique (*BJ* 4.4). Sallust's own experiences in politics seem to have left him well-versed in the political implications of the gender terms *vir* and *homo*.

The tribune G. Memmius delivers the other rousing speech of the book. Again Sallust's alternative perspective is evident. Sallust describes Memmius as *vir acer* (*BJ* 27.2). The historian employs the adjective *acer*, which Cicero used persistently with *homo* in pejorative settings, in contexts of military valour.[46] Sallust also grants Metellus the epithet, *acer vir*, the positive nature of which is evident in his qualification, *et quamquam advorso populi partium, fama tamen aequabili et inviolata* (46.1). Memmius, in rhetoric of which Cicero would have approved, even though he believed the tribune to have been an inferior orator (*Brut.* 136), denounces the political exploitation of the people by the ruling clique of *nobiles* (*BJ* 31.12):

[43] *v. supra*, chapter one, p. 28.
[44] Earl (*supra*, n. 1) 119.
[45] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 2.
[46] *h. acer*, Cicero: *Quinct.* 30; *Verr.* 5.8; *Cluent.* 67; *Leg. Agr.* 2.82; *Cat.* 3.17. *Acer* in Sallust: *B.J.* 7.4; 28.7; 58.4; 94.6; 98.2; 101.7.

> Homines sceleratissumi, cruentis manibus, immani avaritia, nocentissumi et eidem superbissumi, quibus fides, decus, pietas, postremo honesta atque inhonesta omnia quaestui sunt.

The tribune implicitly contrasts *vir* with *homo* when he admonishes his listeners that although a *vir* must not suffer a wrong without vengeance, it is equally wrong to pardon *hominibus sceleratissumis* (*BJ* 31.21). Syme calls Memmius' oration a spirited harangue, characteristic of the "personality and eloquence of the tribune."[47] Memmius' speech further illustrates the rhetorical scope of *vir* as a term of political praise, and *homo* as a label of factional abuse.[48]

The Catilinarian Conspiracy

Sallust, according to Earl, wrote the *War with Catiline* in the idiom of his own day, and the work reflects the political vocabulary of Ciceronian oratory.[49] As in the *War with Jugurtha*, however, that vocabulary is often viewed through the looking-glass of factional politics. This may be illustrated by contrasting the gender terms employed by Cicero and Sallust of L. Valerius Flaccus and G. Pomptinus, the two praetors who stopped the Allobrogians at the Milvian Bridge. Cicero informs the people that he has summoned *fortissimos atque amantissimos rei publicae viros* (Flaccus and Pomptinus) to the country's aid, and ever-mindful of the State's peril, they have led *multos fortes viros* to invest the bridge (*Cat.* 3.5). Cicero presents the praetors as heros who defended the Republic in the face of acute danger. Sallust, on the contrary, has stripped away the heroism, reducing the pair to *homines militares*, who, far from battling honourably, had captured the unsuspecting Gauls *per insidias* (*BC* 45.1-2). Others are the true heroes of the Catilinarian conspiracy, as far as Sallust is concerned: *Sed memoria mea ingenti virtute, divorsis moribus fuere viri duo M. Cato et C. Caesar* (*BC* 53.6).

Sallust initiates his description of Catiline: *de quoius hominis moribus pauca prius explananda sunt, quam initium narrandi faciam* (*BC* 4.5). There follows a catalogue of criminal attributes and the "bacchanalian" rhetoric customarily associated with *homines* (and *mulieres*) in the speeches of Cicero.[50] Individual Catilinarians, such as Curius and Piso,

[47] Syme (*supra*, n. 4) 167.
[48] On Livy's gender terms for tribunes, *v. infra* chapter four.
[49] Earl (*supra*, n. 1) 112.
[50] Animus audax subdolus varius, quoius rei lubet simulator ac dissimulator; alieni

are *homines*. Sallust explains that Piso was given the province of Hispania Citerior, even though he was only a quaestor, because the Senate wished to send the *foedum hominem* as far away from Rome as possible (*BC* 19.2). When Sallust has occasion to specify Catiline's comrades by gender, they are *homines*: e.g. *homines, quibus mala abunde omnia erant, sed neque res neque spes bona ulla*... (*BC* 21.1); *armati homines* (27.2; 28.1); *homines egentes* (37.8); and *homines adulescentes* (38.1). Clearly the word *vir* would be inappropriate under the circumstances. *Viri* plot no evil; nor do they travel in armed gangs; nor do they lack means of support.

Sallust employs his gender terms meticulously, according to situation and character. For instance, as the omniscient historian, he refers to all the Catilinarians as *homines* of the most reprehensible sort. Likewise do his Cato and Caesar in their reported orations.[51] On the other hand, Sallust has Caesar term his senatorial political opponents, such as D. Silanus[52] and Cicero,[53] *viri*, setting the word in ironic contexts. Caesar's use of *vir* for political opponents differs from that which we have seen

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adpetens, sui profusus, ardens in cupiditatibus; satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum. Vastus animus immoderata, incredibilia nimis alta semper cupiebat. Hunc post dominationem L. Sullae lubido maxuma invaserat rei publicae capiundae; neque id quibus modis adsequeretur, dum sibi regnum pararet, quicquam pensi habebat. Agitabatur magis magisque in dies animus ferox inopia rei familiaris et conscientia scelerum, quae utraque iis artibus auxerat, quas supra memoravi. Incitabant praeterea conrupti civitatis mores, quos pessuma ac divorsa inter se mala, luxuria atque avaritia, vexabant (*BC* 5.4-8).

[51] Caesar: *hominibus inpiis* (51.15); *talis homines* (51.17); *homines tanti facinoris convictos* (51.23); and *homines scelestos et factiosos* (51.32). Vretska notes that *scelestus* is used only in the *War with Catiline* and in the *Histories*. He connects the adjective with an archaic sacral formula (*supra*, n. 23) 550. Cato is more reserved in his use of gender terms, confining them to a rhetorical suggestion that the Senate let the misguided *homines adulescentuli* go; their aspirations have led them astray (52.26-27): *Misereamini censeo—deliquere homines...per ambitionem*... (*Misereamini censeo* is the exact opposite argument of that which his illustrious ancestor kept urging in the case of Carthage. Sallust seems to have chosen his words with ironic intent.). *Homines adulescentuli* plants the idea of cutthroat hordes of juvenile delinquents about to be unleashed upon a helpless populace. Cato then reveals the true nature of the *adulescentuli homines*: he cannot believe that the *patres conscripti* would seriously consider mercy *de crudelissumis parricidiis* (52.30-31). On *adulescens* as a component of Bacchanalian rhetoric, chapters two and five.

[52] Consul-elect for 62 B.C.; a *vir fortis ac strenuus*, he argued for the death penalty (*BC* 51.16). The epithet is vituperative in Cicero (K. Ziegler, "*Strenuus* bei Cicero," *RhM* 112 (1969) 35); it has plebeian associations in Livy (*v. infra*, p. 55-56). Vretska believes that it conveys irony (*supra*, n. 23) 535.

[53] *De timore supervacuaneum est disserere, quom praesertim diligentia clarissumi viri consulis tanta praesidia sint in armis* (51.19). Vretska interprets Caesar's words as the starkest irony, particularly *clarissumus vir consul*, uttered by a patrician of a *novus homo* who has turned the State upside-down in his efforts to curb the Conspiracy. Vretska further sees the remark to be an antidote to "*der Selbstbelobung Ciceros*" (The orator has harped upon "*mea diligentia*" in the *Catilinarians*: 1.7; 32; 2.24; 4.23, cited by Vretska (*supra*, n. 22) 538; also 1.11; 2.14; 4.4; 5.). Note that Cicero calls Catiline *hominem...tam in perditis*

in Cicero's speeches. The orator was inclined to hurl *homo* with pejoratives at those who did not agree with him. Caesar's choice of words is governed by the circumstances. No matter how provoked, he would never refer to Silanus and Cicero as *homines*. The only *homines* in this case are Catiline and his cronies in crime. The Senate has closed ranks. They may disagree on the details but are nevertheless united against the threat to the Republic. Sallust, writing as the omniscient historian, is released from such obligations; he may therefore chastise the senatorial clique as *ignavissumi homines* who are undoing all the good work which *fortissumi viri* have done (*BC* 12.5), or reduce Flaccus and Pomptinus, otherwise insignificant praetors, to *homines militares*. The historian, however, who has presented Julius Caesar's speech in *huiuscemodi verba*, has done his best to set it "in character", using vocabulary that Caesar, himself, would have chosen.

Sallust has extended the same treatment to Catiline and his followers. When the story is told through Catiline's eyes, he an his supporters are *viri*, while those he sees to be part of the pernicious clique of nobles are *homines*.[54] Sallust has chosen his words appropriately, according to the exigencies of character. For instance, when Catiline refutes the charges against him in the Senate, lowering both his voice and eyes, he reminds them that he is a *patricius homo*, who has always done his best to serve the Republic. *Patricius homo* (rather than *vir*) reflects Catiline's false modesty (*BC* 31.7). In a letter to T. Volturcius of Croton, however, the chief-conspirator urges him to gird up his courage and remember that he is a *vir* (44.5). P. Umbrenus, a Catilinarian agent, expresses similar sentiments in a communication to the Allobrogians: *At ego, inquit, vobis, si modo viri esse voltis, rationem ostendam, qua tanta ista mala effugiatis* (40.3).[55] And Catiline, when his cause is lost, urges his supporters to fight *pro patria, pro libertate*; and to remember *pristinae virtutis*. He notes the futility of fighting *pro potentia paucorum*, and he assesses the political situation as one intolerable for *viris* (58.11-14)—that is, for himself and

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rebus diligentem (*Cat.* 3.17). *Diligens* is a favourite Ciceronian term of abuse, used with *homo* in the Verrine orations to convey eagerness to swindle or embezzle: e.g., *iste homo certus et diligens ad horam nonam praesto est* (2.92; cf. 5.49; cf. *Cluent.* 91, *G. Verres...homo sanctus et diligens*—an epithet of scathing sarcasm. Foran opposite view, Vretska cites Bahrens, "Sallust als Historiker, Politiker und Tendenzshiriftsteller," *NWZA* 1 (1927) 35-82; cf. Nisbet in *Studies in Latin Literature and its Influences*, ed. T.A. Dorey, (London, 1965) 63.

[54] Scanlon notes that the same rhetorical devices are employed in the speeches as well as the letters (*supra*, n. 8) 91.

[55] Volturcius: cf. Cic. *Cat.* 3.4; 4.5; Umbrenus: *Ib.* 3.14.

his followers, since it is unlikely that even the basest criminal would think of himself in a pejorative light as a *homo*.[56]

Buechner believes that Sallust has presented a "masterpiece of demagogic distortion of the truth" in the speeches, letters and thoughts he has ascribed to Catiline.[57] Perhaps he has, since semantical change during times of stress is a Thucydidean concern which preoccupies Sallust.[58] More simply, he has attempted to depict the speaker in character. Although Catiline employs the same terminology and political slogans as Cicero, Sallust's rhetoric mirrors that of the orator, as has been demonstrated with Scaurus, Bestia and Opimius.[59] This is illustrated in a letter to Q. Catulus, where Catiline complains that *non dignos homines* have been elected to public office (35.3). He could well be writing of Cicero, in that it is Catiline's political opponents who are the *homines*. He and his followers are the *viri*; and in Catiline's own mind, they are acting legitimately to rid the country of the real *homines*, the *pauci potentes*. Sallust indicates that Catiline initially had the support of the urban plebs, and that it was only after the discovery of the supposed conspiracy to torch the city that they changed their allegiance and began to praise Cicero *ad caelum* (48.1). Again, Catiline did not envision himself as a usurper or a leader of criminal *homines*, but rather as a valorous battler with a legitimate grievance who, with his army of intrepid *viri*, would liberate the city from the domination of a faction of worthless *homines* (such as Cicero) who were monopolizing the magistracies.

The Histories

Unlike Sallust's monographs on Jugurtha and Catiline, which offer numerous instances of the author's use of masculine terminology, the *Histories*, because they are fragmentary, provide fewer examples. These, nevertheless, tend to confirm the impressions formed from Sallust's other works.[60] *Vir* is used repeatedly to extol men of political stature, and *homo* is employed to degrade their opponents. For instance, M. Aemilius Lepidus, consul of 78 B.C., in a factional fight, associates *viri* with *virtus* (*H*. 1.55.15) and laments the torture *virorum inlustrium* by Sulla (1.55.17),

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[56] Buechner views Catiline's *adlocutio* as the typical speech of a commanding officer to his troops (*supra*, n. 35) 166.

[57] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

[58] Earl (*supra*, n. 1) 119.

[59] *v. supra*, pp. 48-49.

[60] *C. Sallusti Crispi Historiarum Reliquiae*, B. Maurenbrecher (Leipzig, 1841).

having denounced *homines* who are Sulla's *satellites* (1.55.2). Conversely, L. Marcius Philippus, who, in a speech before the Senate, cites *viri fortes* as defenders of the Republic (1.77.20), assails Lepidus as a *latro* and his *satellites* as *sicarii*: *et ad eum concurrere homines omnium ordinum corruptissumi, flagrantes inopia et cupidinibus, scelerum conscientia exagitati, quibus in seditionibus, in pace turbae sunt* (1.77.7). The scope of *vir* and *homo* in the rhetoric of factional opposites is clearly illustrated in these two instances.

Appius Claudius is presented as *vir gravis* (*H. Fr.* 2.37);[61] and Sallust designates the formidable Mithridates as *vir cum cura dicendis* (*H. Fr.* 2.72).[62] The tribune Licinius Macer recalls *tot viri* who are vindices ..*libertatis* (3.48.22), and mentions an unnamed *fortis vir* (3.48.4). There are anonymous *veteres et sancti viri* (2.70.4), and Mithridates writes of a military cohort *virorum* (4.69.16). Sallust cites Sulla, the dictator, as *talis vir* (1.58).[63] As in his other works, Sallust employs *vir* to represent members of the Senate; a formidable king and military opponent; men of valour; and vindicators of the people's rights. Although there are only two extant specimens of *homo*, they are clearly set into pejorative context and reflect Ciceronian invective.

Sallust's employment of *vir* and *homo* follows the traditional patterns of the last years of the Roman Republic as set forth in the speeches of Cicero. Its application, however, as we have seen, is from a different perspective. Sallust's "looking-glass" representations clearly reflect a factional bias different from that of the orator.

It is in his presentation of his major characters that Sallust leaves factionalism aside. This is particularly evident in the set speeches and letters, as well as when he, as the omniscient historian, tells the story through the mind of a character such as Micipsa. As an emulator of Thucydides, the Roman historian makes a conscious effort to be impartial, rendering his characters' ideas in *huiuscemodi verba*, or as they themselves would have presented them. In doing so, Sallust has aspired to Thucydidean impartiality, and has indeed risen above the appellation of petty pamphleteer.

The Case of the Missing Femina

Sallust's *feminae* are similar to Sherlock Holmes's curious incident of the dogs in the night: there are none. *Femina* is a word that never enters

[61] *Ibid.*, 73.
[62] *Ibid.*, 91.
[63] *Ibid.*, 28.

the Sallustian vocabulary. Since the author never employs the word in his extant writings, one cannot argue a case for how he might have used it. Still it is useful to review passages where he employs *mulier*, as they demonstrate patterns found in Cicero; for Sallust applies *mulier* to members of the lower classes, foreigners, and, in the cases of the female Catilinarians, he uses the noun in contexts of Bacchanalian rhetoric, which imply that it is a term of abuse.

Sallust employs *mulier* only twelve times: three in the *War with Jugurtha*; four in the *Histories*; and five in the *War with Catiline*.[64] Even with this paucity of references, the familiar patterns emerge in the passages referring to specific women. In the *War with Jugurtha*, there is a *mulier ancilla* who shelters the fugitive Hiempsal (12.5); Numidian *mulieres puerique* hurl bricks and tiles from the rooftops at Roman soldiers (67.1); and Numidian *mulieres* and *pueri*, spectators at the Battle of the Maluccha River, are the first to flee (94.5). The *Histories* mention a *Ligus mulier* named Corsa (2.11); and *duae Galliae mulieres* escape the Romans in uncertain light and climb a nearby mountain in order to fulfil their monthly vows (4.40); in addition, Sulla keeps company *cum adulteris mulieribus* (1.60).

Several *mulieres* are singled out for their opprobrium in the *War with Catiline*. It should be recalled that Sallust designated the male members of the conspiracy as *homines*, rather than *viri*, except when the story was told through the eyes of Catiline. One might hypothesize that the historian subjected the female members of the conspiracy to the same treatment. They are clearly members of the aristocracy, as is indicated by their appetite for imported delicacies and their indolent taste for other luxuries (13.3-5). It is obvious that these women have failed the moral test, as have the men; *lubido* is triumphant: Sallust states that *viri* are acting *muliebriter* and *mulieres* are offering their *pudicitia* on the open market (13.3). This passage, and one in Lepidus' speech, in which the *muliebre ingenium* is identified with cowardice (*H.* 1.55 (K15)), demonstrates the pejorative attributes of *muliebris*.

Among the conspirators is Fulvia, a *mulier nobilis* with a long history of *stuprum* (23.3); she only turns State's evidence because of her lover's *insolentia*. Another is the cultivated Sempronia, whom Sallust numbers among the *mulieres* who had engaged in *stuprum* for money, but whose business, because of age, had dwindled in inverse proportion to their

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[64] A.W. Bennett, *Index Verborum Sallustianus* (Hildesheim, 1977), s.v., *mulier*. cf. fragmentary *H.* 2.92.18 (K6).

escalating expense accounts (24.3). Sempronia, according to Sallust, was a *mulier* who committed *virilis audaciae facinora* (25.1). A model of *impudicitia*, she serves as a prototype for Tacitus' Poppaea.[65] Her portrait is splashed with strident pigments: her *lubido* has been *accensa*, causing her to chase after *viros*; *caedes conscia fuerat, luxuria atque inopia praeceps abierat* (25.3-4). Flaming *lubido*, *luxuria*, and *caedes* belong to the *topos* of the (Bacchanalian) conspirator.

Sallust's final reference to *mulieres* in the Catiline affair is to the terror-stricken members of the Roman community (31.3):

> ...mulieres, quibus rei publicae magnitudine belli timor insolitus incesserat, adflictare sese, manus supplices ad caelum tendere, miserari parvos liberos rogitare, omnia...pavere...superbia atque deliciis omissis sibi patriaeque diffidere.

These nameless *mulieres* represent a chorus of gloom which finds repeated expression in the pages of Livy where, it will be demonstrated, *feminae* never lose hope for themselves or for their country.

Despite the absence of *femina* in Sallust's extant works, the author's employment of *mulier* parallels that of *homo* and reflects Ciceronian patterns. There seem to have been set rhetorical standards for gender terms to which both Cicero and Sallust adhered. Full understanding of their usage is essential for evaluating the characterizations of both men and women in the Ciceronian age.

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[65] J.P.V.D. Balsdon, *Roman Women, their History and Habits* (London, 1962) 49.

CHAPTER FOUR

AB URBE CONDITA: WHEN VIRI WERE *VIRI*

Livy, like Thucydides, observed human nature and viewed history as a lesson for mankind in which great moral issues were at stake.[1] Toward this end, Livy went even further than did Thucydides, framing his history in "a series of moral episodes...designed to bring out the character of the leading figures," thus reducing great events of the past to a level comprehensible to his reading public.[2] By endowing his characters with clear-cut virtues and vices, Livy was able to present his readers moral *exempla* with which they could readily identify. As P.G. Walsh writes, the real heroes of *Ab Urbe Condita* are *pietas*, *fides*, *concordia*, *ratio*, *clementia*, and so forth, who all wage continual war against the villains *furor*, *ferocitas*, *temeritas*, *libido*, *luxuria* and their like.[3] Because of this polarized framework, Livy's presentation of Roman history is a panoramic chiaroscuro of dichotomies. His dualistic premise demands simplistic characters so that the reader may know where a particular personage stands in the moral scheme.[4] An incidental component in the creation of what are, at best, two-dimensional characters, was the historian's use of *vir* and *homo* as capsule identifications.

Livy's masculine terminology reflects that of Cicero in that he generally employs *vir* for the distinguished and *homo* for the humble, the foreigner (with an ethnic adjective), and as a term of abuse, sometimes in direct evocation of the Republican orator. The historiographical idiom, however, permits greater freedom and variation of usage than did the forensic speech. An instance is Livy's treatment of tribunes of the plebs. Since he is not bent on defaming them, as was Cicero, Livy, if he employs a gender term, presents them as *viri*. As with Cicero, moral qualifications determine whether a character is a *vir* or a *homo*; but where the orator's ethical yardstick was based upon factional politics, the historian's is founded upon unified loyalty to Country. Thus salient fidelity to Rome may elevate a man of low or foreign birth to the status

[1] R.M. Ogilvie, Introduction, *Livy: the Early History of Rome* (Harmondsworth, 1960-71) 8.

[2] *Ibid.*, 9.

[3] P.G. Walsh, *Livy, His Historical Aims and Methods* (Cambridge, 1961) 66; cf. T.J. Luce, *Livy, the Composition of His History* (Princeton, 1977) 231-232.

[4] Walsh (*supra*, n. 3) 82-109; Luce (*supra*, n. 3) 232.

of *vir*; on the other hand, disloyalty to country or the breaking of an oath is enough to demote an otherwise *vir* to the rank of *homo*.

The Clarissimus, *the* Consularis, *and the Conservative* Vir

The Roman historical *vir* of Livy in many ways resembles the Roman political *vir* of Cicero. Usually a consular, he is morally sound and acts in the interests of the Republic; never rash, he deliberates carefully and displays moderation on all occasions.

Livy's ex-consuls are *viri consulares, clari* or *clarissimi*. Active in public life, they fight to the death for the Republic.[5] Like the *consulares* of Cicero's day, they play the game of factional politics for high stakes, and sometimes lose, as when the Senate refuses Q. Minucius a triumph equal to that of G. Cornelius in 197. In consequence, Minucius awards himself one, *iure imperii consularis*, to be held upon the Alban Mount where, he sniffs, so many other *clari viri* have been forced by jealous colleagues to hold theirs (33.23.3).[6]

Vir clarissimus may have been an official epithet used in senatorial business, as is indicated when the tribune L. Valerius Tappo employs it of the consul Cato, his opponent in the debate over the *Lex Oppia* (34.5.2).[7] Livy essayed for verisimilitude in his speeches,[8] and it is likely that he has employed the term proper for a tribune to use of a consul. The epithet's status value is also illustrated when Scipio Nasica, extolling the *gens Cornelia*, is outraged that his cousin, Lucius, a *vir clarissimus* and *fortissimus*, might be imprisoned with *latrones* (38.59.10).

Moral implications as well as social are inherent in the term when Gn. Octavius pontificates to his junior officers on the permutations of human fortunes, maintaining that the real *vir* is one who will remain steadfast in the overwhelming winds of success and whose courage will not be soured by the uses of adversity (35.8.7). Meritorious service to the

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[5] *Vir consularis*: 6.17.3; 22.53.4. *Clarissimus vir*, Q. Fabius, master of horse: 8.32.15. *Multi clari viri* are candidates for the censorship in 199 (32.7.3). Other consulars, Sempronius: *vir tam clarus at insignis*, killed in Lucania (25.17.4); Africanus: a *maior et clarior vir*, hounded by ungrateful tribunes (38.50.4); elsewhere Africanus expounds upon *omnis aevi clari viri* (28.43.6). Cf. Valerius and Verginius, augurs: 3.7.6; Lepidus, *pontifex maximus*, and *multi clari viri*: 40.42.12; cf. 37.57.9; 38.53.4.

[6] e.g., M. Claudius Marcellus (26.21.2-6). For Minucius' entire story, Liv. 33.22-23.

[7] A controversy exists whether Cato was termed *vir gravissimus* or *vir clarissimus*. D. W. Packard opts for *clarissimus*, *A Concordance of Livy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968) s.v., *vir*; J. Briscoe supports this on grounds that *gravissimus* with *vir* rarely appears in Cicero (as opposed to three columns for *clarissimus*), and that the expression is seen nowhere else in Livy. *A Commentary on Livy. Books 34-37* (Oxford, 1981) 55.

[8] Ogilvie (*supra*, n. 1) 9.

Republic is implicit in the epithet when Livy awards it to Menenius Agrippa, *vir omni in vita pariter patribus ac plebi carus* (2.33.10), who has restored the harmony of the State by mediating between the warring patricians and plebeians.[9]

Certain epithets, such as *bonus* and *optimus vir*—catchwords of political conservatism in Cicero's speeches—are reflected when Livy designates Appius Claudius' uncle *constantissimus vir in optimatium causa* (3.35.9). Factional overtones may likewise be deduced when the senatorial committee seeks a *vir optimus* to greet *Magna Mater* in 204 B.C. (29.14.6); similarly, when their choice finally falls upon the *adulescens*, P. Scipio Gn. f., Livy notes: *iudicaverunt in tota civitate virum bonorum optimum esse* (29.14.8-9). Livy, writing in an era when politically oriented terms have become meaningless, nevertheless, has employed such expressions as the *boni* would have in the heyday of the Republic.

Moderation and prudence were virtues that Cicero associated with sound conservatism.[10] Livy reflects similar political overtones when he relates that the Senate chose M. Livius Salinator, *moderatus vir et prudens*, to counteract the *acre ingenium* of C. Claudius Nero (27.34.3). In another instance, however, he equates the epithet with political expediency and presents P. Aelius Paetus, consul of 201, as a *moderatus* and *prudens vir* for exercising good political sense in not contesting Scipio for the province of Africa (30.40.8). Such forbearance in wartime can only benefit the Republic. In both instances, the aristocratic term *vir* enhances the epithet and suggests that calm deliberation—so necessary in a magistrate of the Roman Republic—is inherent in the moral values of the upper classes.

The Livian Tribune

Livy's tribunes, unlike Cicero's, are always *viri*. The historian often calls them *viri fortes ac strenui*, or *viri acres*, epithets he uses repeatedly for members of the plebeian aristocracy.[11] In fact, Livy's specification

[9] cf., Q. Servilius Priscus, a *vir cuius providentiam in republica* has been tested upon many occasions (4.46.10).

[10] e.g., Cato the Younger: *prudentissimus vir* (*Div. Caec.* 66; *Dom.* 21); *prudentissimi viri*: conservatives who did not wish to change the existing laws (*Verr.* 3.19). T.J. Moore equates *moderatio* in Livy with self-restraint: *Artistry and Ideology: Livy's Vocabulary of Virtue* (Frankfurt, 1989) 72.

[11] On the identification of the adjectives *fortis ac strenuus* with the plebeians: Moore (*supra*, n. 10) 18-19; on *vir fortis ac strenuus* as an heroic epithet: F. Santoro L'hoir, "Heroic Epithets and Recurrent Themes in *Ab Urbe Condita*," *TAPA* 120 (1990) 221-41. K.M.

of tribunes as *viri* demonstrates a fundamental difference in attitude from that of Cicero. The orator's constant use of *homo* with pejorative adjectives for holders of that office derives from the lexicon of factional politics. Livy's history is all about the evils brought about by faction; he therefore shuns the terminology of divisiveness in reference to men whom he envisions to be working for harmony, and presents tribunes of the plebs—legitimately striving for the betterment of the Republic—as *viri fortes ac strenui* and *viri acres*, vindicators of liberty and promotors of eventual concord. He reserves vituperative epithets for reprobates such as Turnus Herdonius, a *seditiosus facinerosusque homo*, whose oratory (even though he is right) landed him in a stone-filled wicker basket at the bottom of the Tiber. (1.50.7). Even though Turnus is not a tribune, he, nevertheless, uses demagogic tactics.[12]

The Fearless Vir

Just as *vir* in Cicero's speeches was often synonymous with courage, so it is for Livy. Where the orator, however, had a narrow and sometimes self-interested concept of bravery, the historian—writing in a more flexible medium—explores its many facets. For Tanaquil, courage signifies seizing the opportune moment, and she prods Servius Tullius to action, assuring him that if he be a *vir*, the *regnum* will be his (1.41.3); for Lucretia, courage means revenge, and she urges her husband and his friends to be *viri* and exact vengeance upon Sex. Tarquinius (1.58.8); for Brutus, courage betokens a fight to the finish, and after Lucretia's funeral, he entreats the Romans to take up their swords in a manner befitting *viri* (1.59.4).

The courage of an able leader is implied when Q. Fabius Maximus urges the Senate to remove the newly elected T. Otacilius from the consulship on grounds of incompetence. This scene, which provides comic relief from the tension built up in the previous books by Hannibal's apparent invincibility, depicts Fabius and his nephew-in-law, Otacilius,

Ziegler notes Cicero's ironic usage: "*Strenuus* bei Cicero," *RhM* 12 (1969) 30. Hellegouarc'h associates *strenuus* with *fortis*: *Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la république* (Paris, 1963) 250. On *vir acer* as an heroic epithet: Santoro L'hoir (*op. cit.*); on *acer*: Moore (*op. cit.*) 23-26. Cicero used *acer* of *duces*, *hostes*, *imperatores*, and once of a *nimium acer, nimium vehemens tribunus plebis* (*Leg. Agr.* 3.7). He coupled the adjective only with *homo*; and I. Opelt connects the adjective with the vocabulary of the criminal, *Die Lateinischen Schimpfwörter und verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen: eine Typologie* (Heidelberg, 1965) 209.

[12] Livy borrows from Ciceronian anti-tribunician rhetoric for *seditiosus facinerosusque h.*; (e.g., Cic. *Dom.* 12; 82; *Cluent.* 94). He gives similar treatment to M. Postumius Regillensis, *pravae mentis homo* (4.49.8) and the perfidious Pacuvius Calavius, *v. infra.*, p. 74.

in the midst of a family spat on the Senate floor. Otacilius bellows that Fabius wants to hog the consulship for himself, and Fabius, maintaining his composure in a speech full of humourous remarks at Otacilius' expense, invokes the storm-weathered Ship-of-State (24.8.12-13):

> Quilibet nautarum, vectorumque tranquillo mari gubernare potest; ubi saeva orta tempestas est ac turbato mari rapitur vento navis, tum viro et gubernatore opus est.

Fabius, using a metaphor that must have been galling to an admiral of the Roman fleet, has summed up the qualities that go into the composition of a *vir et gubernator*, and in that consular's estimation, Otacilius is deficient in all of them.[13]

Vir clearly denotes bravery in the following examples. In the first, the word is used as an instrument of flattery: L. Bantius, a survivor of Cannae, decides to betray his city Nola to the Carthaginians in gratitude for Hannibal's clemency. His fellow soldiers boost his ego, assuring him that he is a *vir* whose courage has been tested repeatedly in battle (23.15.12). A second example concerns a Campanian upstart, Badius who, in an outburst of *audacia* and *ferocia*, challenges his patron and better to a duel. "*Si vir esset*," ruminates Badius in an aside, "*Congrederetur*!" (25.18.11). *Vir* is clearly a component in Livy's presentation of the many aspects of courage written into the moral scenario of *Ab Urbe Condita*.

The Militaris Vir

Livy's history is of epic proportions,[14] and *vir* is synonymous with the battling hero, as it was for Vergil, who began his epic: *Arma virumque cano*. Livian warriors often do battle *vir cum viro*, an expression which implies face-to-face combat at close quarters.[15]

Livy sometimes deploys *militares viri*;[16] and *arma*, *viri* and *equi*.[17]

[13] Livy's primary purpose will have been to demonstrate that Fabius put the Republic before family ties, but as A.H. Mac Donald has noted, Livy was well aware of dramatic and rhetorical effect and would have realized the value of varying his technique with comic relief to highlight the dramatic moments. "The style of Livy," *JRS* 47 (1957) 159-63.

[14] Walsh notes the similarities in scope between Vergil's epic and Livy's book one, in particular (*supra*, n. 3) 10. He also sees Vergilian evocations in poetic vocabulary as well as in the content of episodes, *Ibid.*, p. 256.

[15] Sulpicius, addressing the *comitia centuriata*, is clearly concerned with military superiority when, stating that Philip and the Macedonians surpass Pyrrhus and the Epirots, he contrasts them *vir viro* and *gens genti* (31.7.9).

[16] e.g.,10.24.4; 30.15.13.

[17] *Arma* and *viri*: e.g., 1.30.4; 8.5.3; 22.6.5; 24.24.8; 34.33.10; 35.35.7; and Livy notes the lack thereof: 10.34.6; *arma*, *viri* and *equi*: e.g., 22.39.11; 30.11.3; 35.44.5; *equi* and *viri*: e.g., 3.70.6; 10.28.11; 22.52.5; 26.4.8; 31.42.1.

Militares homines, often included with the baggage, only figure as masses of troops or as casualty statistics, often in the genitive plural.[18] *Militares viri* had obligations to their men, such as the sharing of booty, which Livy estimates as proof of affection between officers and men (5.47.8). Romulus earns the title, *vir magnificus*, for his generosity to his troops (1.10.5); and M. Manlius, *vir bello egregius*, won so much esteem that he was rewarded by his fellow commanders as well as his troops (5.47.4).

Ab Urbe Condita teems with stouthearted men, whom Livy terms *fortissimi viri*, as did Cicero. One encounters *fortissimi viri*, either dead or alive, on the battlefields of the Punic or Macedonian wars.[19] Hannibal exhorts his troops to be *fortes viri* before the battle of Ticinus and to return victorious or not at all (21.44.8). Livy sometimes cites the *robur fortissimorum virorum*; and *robore virorum* is a recurrent expression. Men with hearts-of-oak appear on both Roman and Carthaginian sides, and before the battle of Trebia, Hannibal informs Mago that the troops are ready for combat: "*Robora virorum cerno.*" (21.54.3).[20]

Fortissimus vir, it will be recalled, was a frequent epithet in Cicero's speeches. The orator, however, employed the term as a perfunctory political title. Livy, on the contrary, has preserved the pristine heroic sense of the epithet, and he even mocks those who use it lightly. For instance, after Capua's betrayal to the Carthaginians, Taurea Vibellius, a condemned senator, taunts M. Fulvius Flaccus, informing him that he is about to execute a *multo fortiorem...virum* than he, Fulvius; at which point, Vibellius stabs himself (26.15.12-15). Livy then relates a second version in which Fulvius hears Vibellius protesting loudly that he is a *vir fortissimus* about to be killed *ab nequaquam pari ad virtutem*. Fulvius, with consummate sarcasm, orders that the "*vir fortis*" be the first to be punished: "*Lictor, viro forti adde virgas et in eum primum lege age*!" (26.16.3-4) Livy portrays the Capuan speaking in character, referring to

[18] 9.14.12; 21.35.1; 21.58.11; 22.3.1; 29.25.8; 30.6.6 are mentioned with *iumenta*. *Militares homines* refers to overworked veteran centurions in 42.33.3; and when the tribune G. Laetorius is attempting to alert the Senate to the ruthless intentions of Appius and his *superbissima* and *crudelissima* Claudian clan, he tells them that his *rudis in militari homine lingua* cannot express the necessary eloquence to describe their evils. Laetorius is clearly using *militaris homo* as an expression of self-deprecation (2.56.8). Packard (*supra*, n. 7) s.v. *hominum*.

[19] 22.35.7; 22.50.7; 22.52.6; 22.60.17, where *viri fortissimi* combat *inertes* in a reverse evocation of Cicero (*v. supra*, p. 22); 28.19.14; 33.22.8; 37.43.7; 38.46.7; cf. 9.24.8; 34.6; 10.13.7. Hannibal lauds his fallen brothers as *fortissimi viri* and *clarissimi imperatores* (30.30.17); and *viri fortes* is used of military tribunes: 24.46.2.

[20] *Robor fortissimorum virorum*: 37.43.7; cf. 8.10.6; 22.6.2; 23.18.4; 29.12; 25.21.7. Cicero once wrote *eo robore vir* in reference to Pompey, in a letter to Atticus (6.6.4).

himself in heroic terms; Fulvius' ironical response, however, mocks the words of the self-proclaimed *vir fortissimus*, who has been condemned to death for betrayal of Rome.

Note how Livy witholds the term *vir* from G. Terentius Varro, blamed for the Cannae disaster. By right of his social position, the consul of 216 B.C. deserves the title. Livy, however, informs his readers that Varro (a butcher's son) has entered politics declaiming *pro sordidis hominibus...adversus rem et famam bonorum*, urging passage of a bill to abrogate the command of Fabius Maximus (22.26.2-4). The historian terms Varro a *sui generis homo* who had ingratiated himself with the plebs *popularibus...artibus* (22.34.2). Livy weaves this information into the narrative to prepare the reader not only for Varro's loss at Cannae, but also for his flight from the field where so many *fortissimi viri* have perished (22.50.3; 7). The historian has set the stage, as it were, by incidental use of *homo* with pejoratives in traditional contexts of Ciceronian invective.

Courage is not a prerogative of the aristocracy. It can compensate for obscurity of birth, as Livy demonstrates with the centurion, Verginius, *vir exempli recti domi militiaeque*, who earned honours in battle at Algidus (3.44.2); similarly, bravery can transcend infirmities, as with the physically weak *primus pilus*, who was, nevertheless, a *strenuus vir peritusque militiae* (8.8.16-17); valour can also overcome the handicap of nationality, as with the fighting Volscian, Vettius Messius, *nobilior vir factis quam genere* (4.28.3).[21]

Time and again *vir* is employed in contexts of strength and courage in battle. Livy presents a series of men, called *viri impigri*, who exhibit industriousness and enterprise on the battlefield. Likewise, there is a procession of heroes individually termed *unus vir*, who repeatedly save the State in its critical hour of peril.[22] Like Vergil, Livy is recounting heroes and battles, and *vir* embodies the epic hero who displays his courage over and over in his history. The expression *fortissimus homo* is not only non-existent, but it is also inconceivable.

Homo Humillimus

At the opposite end of the scale from the *viri* are the *homines*. The word *homo* appears many more times than does *vir* in Livy's history. The

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[21] Livy repeatedly makes it clear that deeds can compensate for relatively humble birth.

[22] On *vir impiger* and *unus vir* as heroic epithets: Santoro L'hoir: (*supra*, n. 11) 222-24; 230-41. On the adjective *impiger*: Moore (*supra*, n. 10) 26-29.

majority of references, however, are to *homines* in general, in which case the word is strictly neutral.[23] Individual characters, identified specifically as *homines* are fewer than those specified by gender as *viri*. Nevertheless, collective *homines* are omnipresent in the history of Rome, especially the *plebis homines* who act as supernumeraries in the continuing drama between patricians and plebeians.[24] That *homo* may be regarded as synonymous with "lowly" is indicated in the clause *apud infimae plebis homines* (24.23.10), and also in the expression *humillimus homo* (3.19.9), which, if it seems redundant, is nevertheless apt, since *humillimus* and *vir* are mutually exclusive. In fact, Livy contrasts *vir* and *homo* in a way that demonstrates the high status of the former and the humble station of the latter when he tells of the hero Evander, *venerabilis vir miraculo litterarum*, who supposedly introduced *res novae* in the form of the alphabet *inter rudes artium homines* (1.7.8).[25]

Should an individual *plebis homo* make his entrance onto the Livian stage, his part will be played either for the benefit of his betters, or else to provide the reading audience with a cautionary message. One such *plebis homo*, L. Albinius, is instrumental in furthering the cause of the State religion.[26] The scene is the Forum Boarium, thronged with panic-stricken refugees, pressing and elbowing their way toward the *Pons Sublicius* (The ululations of the conquering Gauls can be heard off-stage.); among them is Albinius who has stuffed his worldly possessions and his wife and children into an ox-cart. With great difficulty, he heads his vehicle up the declivitous slope of the Janiculum on a road clogged with fleeing citizens. Among them Albinius notices the *flamen Quirinalis* and college of Vestal Virgins plodding on foot, encumbered by sundry sacred objects. Being, as Livy remarks, a man who can tell the difference between matters human and divine, and one who knows *religio* when he sees it, Albinius is outraged. He therefore acts promptly, doing what any humane, compassionate and public spirited citizen would do: he dumps his wife and children and picks up the sacerdotal hitch-hikers with their hallowed paraphernalia, and steers his cart out the future Via Aurelia to

[23] *Homo* is used especially in the genitive plural, often in a partitive or numerical sense. *Homines* in the generic sense (e.g. *homines* think that...) will not be considered here. See Packard (*supra*, n.7) s.v. *homo*, *homines* in the words' several cases.

[24] 2.55.3, 4; 3.14.5; 6.36.11; 8.33.12; 10.8.4; Other *plebis homines*, 1.9.11; 24.2.10; 24.23.10.

[25] Livy indicates a credulous and uneducated public when he writes of *simplices ac religiosi homines* who readily believe the *omina* (24.10.6); likewise, *simplices homines* join *improbos seditiososque* in the Aetolian imbroglio (35.34.8).

[26] R.M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy, Books 1-5* (Oxford, 1965) notes that the story was a famous *exemplum* in antiquity, pp. 723-4.

Caere—their destination, not his. On the fate of spouse and progeny, Livy is silent (5.39-40). The message is that if a *plebis homo* is capable of discernment in matters of religion, so then should be the reader of Livy's history whose station in life is higher by far than that of the lowly Albinius.[27]

Homo Peregrinus *vs.* Vir Peregrinus

As Rome grew from a small town to a world power, her inhabitants came into contact with more and more aliens. Such persons were perceived to be inferior to the city's autochthonous citizens, particularly by the ruling classes.[28] This perception of inferiority is seen in the Latin language which employs *homo* and *mulier* with an ethnic adjective.[29] There is, however, no additional pejorative intent behind an expression such as *Mediterraneus homo* (35.26.4), as is used of Arcas; or *unus homo Syracusis*, used to designate Archimedes (24.34.1). *Homo* with a locative adjective is merely the traditional manner of referring to non-Romans. In the case of Archimedes, moreover, Livy's point is that *unus homo* brought an entire Roman consular army to a standstill; no *militaris vir* was Archimedes, but rather *unicus spectator caeli siderumque, mirabilior...inventor ac machinator bellicorum tormentorum operumque* (24.34.2), who used his intellect rather than the sword.

Livy occasionally refers to groups of foreigners who are members of the upper classes; other than designating their nationality, he does not name them. For instance, the Carthaginian envoys, who beg the Senate for permission to enter the city to confer with their captured compatriots, are *nobiles homines* (30.43.6); and the Hypatan exiles, slain by Eupolemus, are *inlustres homines* (41.25.4). No particular disgrace is implied; *homo* is merely the customary word for foreigners who are little more than supernumeraries in the drama.[30]

Distinguished peregrines, on the other hand, particularly if Livy names them, merit the term *vir*. Like their Roman counterparts, they excel in nobility and military valour. Hannibal, for instance, is wel-

[27] Another such story, concerns T. Latinius, *de plebe homo* (2.36.2), and shows that the lower orders must never hesitate to bring their problems, especially religious matters, to their conscript fathers. Ogilvie writes that Livy has embroidered greatly upon the tale (*Ibid.*, 327), which concerns an admonitory dream of Juppiter; it delivers a message reiterated throughout *Ab Urbe Condita*: every citizen from the lowest to the highest must heed the gods; failure to do so will invite disaster.

[28] *v. supra*, chapter one, pp. 19-20.

[29] *v. supra*, chapter one, pp. 19-20.

[30] It was used in a similar manner by Cicero; *supra*, p. 19.

comed to Tyre as *vir tam clarus omni genere honorum* (33.49.5); and Antigonus Doson is cited as *regiae vir maiestatis* who was celebrated for his campaigns against Cleomenes of Sparta (40.54.4). Livy has cast many noble foreigners into his epic production. Some play major roles, and others, brief but integral cameo parts. Among the more notable is Attalus of Pergamum whom Livy singles out with an obituary: *Huic viro praeter divitias nihil ad spem regni fortuna dederat* (33.21.2). Attalus, he continues in an abbreviation of Polybius' text (18.41), has earned merit by distributing his wealth with prudence, conquering the Gauls in a single battle, ruling his people with justice, remaining loyal to his allies, and treating his wife, sons, and friends with courtesy and generosity (33.21.2-3). Such exemplary behaviour is enough to elevate Attalus from the ranks of the *homines*.[31]

Vir is appropriate to the high station of Alexander, *princeps Aetolorum*, and it emphasizes his moral stance as he berates King Philip for demonstrating bad faith in peace and lack of courage in war.[32] Livy designates the Aetolian 'conscience' of the king, *vir...inter Aetolos facundus* (32.33.10). High position, rather than morality lies behind the term, *vir nobilis ac potens*, used of the Theban, Ismenias (42.43.9). Elected chief Boeotarch, he has condemned exiled magistrates to death. He is nevertheless *potens*, and *vir* emphasizes his position of authority. Among the several *principes Macedonum* in Philip's entourage, there is an *Achaeorum exul*, Cycliadas, *vir insignis* (32.32.10). Like Ismenias and Alexander, he is clearly a man of importance; therefore *vir* is the suitable term.

The Foreigner and Romanitas

Livy is enamoured of the "noble savage," and, significantly, the qualities with which he endows these paragons of pristine *virtus* are old-fashioned Roman ideals of courage, *fides* and *religio*.[33] Such persons, like selvatic

[31] Livy, in various obituaries of great men, always memorializes them as *viri*. Camillus: *vir unicus in omne fortuna, princeps pace belloque* (7.1.9); Scipio Africanus: *vir memorabilis* (38.53.9), except that he was *bellicis tamen quam pacis artibus memorabilior*. Marius, in a similar double-edged obituary: *vir, cuius si examinentur cum virtutibus vitia, haud facile sit dictu, utrum belli melior an pace perniciosior fuerit* (*Per.* 80). Cicero: *omnium adversorum nihil ut viro dignum erat tulit praeter mortem*. Livy, then weighs the orator's virtues against his vices and finally declares: *vir magnus, acer, memorabilis fuit, et in cuius laudes persequendas Cicerone laudatore opus fuerit* (*Fr.* 120.50). The faults of Scipio, Marius and Cicero in no way detract from their stature as great *viri* of Roman history.

[32] *Princeps*, according to Hellegouarc'h, is a personal title which refers to men of *auctoritas* who dominate others due to their eminent position (*supra*, n. 11) 133.

[33] Walsh (*supra*, n. 3) 87.

pets, must be kept on short leashes, and care must be taken lest they revert to type, as is evident when Scipio lectures the love-besotted Masinissa (who reacts like a chastened puppy) on the responsibilities of *amicitia, virtus, temperantia* and *continentia libidinum* (30.12-15). It is evident that Roman virtues are the desired goal in life,[34] and Roman-ness may be an essential element in placing a foreigner into the category of the *vir*. Thus Timastheus, a chieftain *in summo magistratu* from Lipari, who respects captured envoys, is *Romanis vir similior quam suis* (5.28.3). But note how Livy terms a Roman envoy, who has resorted to trickery, by slinking back into camp on a ruse to dissolve his oath with the Carthaginians, *minime Romani ingenii homo* (22.58.8)—an expression which demonstrates the importance of Roman standards of behaviour as a criterion in the choice between *vir* or *homo*. Such norms, however, may be adjusted according to the expedients of war, as shall be established below.

Fortuna, Fides, *and the Foreigner*

Fidelity to Rome is the refining crucible in which Livy tests the foreigner to determine whether he rates the appellation *vir*. The Second Punic War, a period in which the loyalty of the allies was pivotal to Roman success or failure, provides several examples, including that of Abelux, a Spanish nobleman noted for cunning rather than fidelity to Carthage, which controlled most of Spain (22.22.6). Livy expresses reservations, noting that the changing of *fides* according to the permutations of fortune is characteristic of barbarians (*Ibid.*). Nevertheless, he cites the expediency of the Spaniard's actions in the battle for Saguntum, which brought the Spanish *principes* into *amicitia* with the Romans (22.22.8). Abelux furthermore has duped the Carthaginian governor, Bostar, into freeing the Spanish hostages whom Hannibal had sent to Saguntum for safekeeping. Livy describes Bostar negatively: *homini non ad cetera Punica ingenia callido persuasit* [*Abelux*] (22.22.15). There is an implicit antithesis between the wily *vir*, Abelux, and the dull-witted *homo*, Bostar.

Abelux's deeds, which turned the Roman tide in Spain, earn him the epithets, *vir unus* (22.22.6) and *vir prudens* (22.22.20). *Vir unus*, a

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[34] On Masinissa, J.M.K. Martin writes: "No schoolboy could emerge from a comparable ordeal with greater contrition..." "Livy and romance," *G&R* 11 (1942) 128. On Roman virtue, Luce maintains that Livy believed Roman character to be "historically determined and subject to historical development" (*supra*, n. 3) 87.

variation of an epithet that Livy uses repeatedly for heros who save the State, foreshadows L. Marcius Philippus, another *vir unus*, who secures Spain for the Romans in the war against Carthage (25.37.2).[35] *Vir prudens* implies a man who has had the good sense to abandon a worthless cause and to cast his lot with the Romans. Under normal circumstances, the breaking of an oath is reprehensible, according to Livian thinking; infidelity is worthy of tyrants, such as Moagetes, despot of Cibyra, on whom the historian bestows an epithet in the grand old tradition of Cicero: *homo ad omnia infidus atque importunus* (38.14.4). Livy repeatedly makes it clear that the rupture of bonds of fidelity is totally un-Roman, as with the above-mentioned *minime Romani ingenii homo* (22.58.8). Early in *Ab Urbe Condita* the historian is equally severe with Postumius Regillensis, a *pravae mentis homo* who breaks his promise to his troops (4.49.8). Ogilvie notes that Livy has modified the story in order to portray Postumius as the "brutal oppressor and bully."[36] *Homo* with pejoratives, appropriate to a breaker of oaths, has contributed to that negative picture. Although Livy employs *mutare fidem* of both Abelux and Postumius, there the similarity ends, and the disparity between the two is summed up in the antithetical terms *vir* and *homo*; for the *homo* Postumius has altered his *fides* for personal gain, but Abelux, the *vir prudens*, who, *haudfrusta videbatur socios mutasse*, has won the gratitude of *SPQR*. Livy's presentation of the two is a demonstration of the Thucydidean principle that words and ideas change their traditional significance in wartime, when the rules of the game, including *fides*, become negotiable and meaningless.[37]

Note how Livy employs Ciceronian rhetoric of Pacuvius Calavius, a Capuan senator, who after Trasimennus urged the town to desert the Romans and go over to the Carthaginian side (23.2.2-4):

> Senatum et sibi et plebi obnoxium Pacuvius Calavius fecerat, nobilis idem ac popularis homo, ceterum malis artibus nanctus opes. Is cum eo forte anno, quo res male gesta ad Trasumennum est, in summo magistratu esset, iam diu infestam senatui plebem ratus per occasionem novandi res magnum ausuram facinus ut, si in ea loca Hannibal cum victore exercitu venisset, trucidato senatu traderet Capuam Poenis, improbus homo sed non ad extremum perditus, cum mallet incolumi quam eversa re publica dominari, nullam autem incolumem esse orbatam publico consilio crederet, rationem iniit qua et senatum servaret et obnoxium sibi ac plebi faceret.

[35] Santoro L'hoir (*supra*, n. 11) 230-41; on Marcius, 233-34.

[36] Ogilvie (*supra*, n. 1) 609-10.

[37] See Thuc. 3.82-83. The divergence of opinion on the Italian position in 1943 comes to mind. The Germans viewed their eleventh hour change of sides as rank betrayal; the allies, as expediency based upon common sense; the Italians, themselves, as survival.

Just as the *homo popularis*, T. Labienus, betrayed (*tradidit*) the freedom of innocent citizens to the executioner (Cic. *Rabir.* 12), and the *homo popularis*, P. Clodius defrauded the public *improbissime* (*Har. Resp.* 42), so the *homo popularis* and *improbus homo*, Pacuvius Calavius, would betray Capua to the Carthaginians (*traderet Capuam Poenis*). Livy's epithet, *improbus homo sed non ad extremum perditus*, is significant. *Perditus* belongs to the lexicon of armed *coniuratio* and recalls Cicero's Catilinarian speeches where repeated references are made to *coniuratio perditorum hominum*, or *ingens numerus perditorum hominum*, whom Cicero has conjured up as armed incendiaries bent upon slaughter and destruction.[38] Livy, however, makes it clear that Pacuvius is not trying to destroy the government, but rather to put himself in charge of it, in the manner of Sulla (*re publica dominari*). This in itself is a selfish motive that is sufficient to render Pacuvius a *homo* and disqualify him from being a *vir*.

Livy's foil for Pacuvius is Decius Magius, a Capuan loyal to Rome. Decius begs the Capuans not to change sides, and Livy uses *vir* in an editorial epithet that summarizes Decius' moral worth: *vir cui ad summam auctoritatem nihil praeter sanam civium mentem defuit* (23.7.4). When Hannibal orders Decius to be thrown into chains, however, Livy uses *homo* to reflect Hannibal's orders: *Poenus comprehendi hominem vinctumque adtrahi ad sese iussit* (23.7.8). An English rendition of the direct discourse would be: "Put the *homo* in chains!" Conversely, when Hannibal finally coerces the Capuan senate into deporting Decius, Livy employs *vir* as a term of respect when he records that certain members of the senate remarked that Decius was a *vir indignus ea calamitate* (23.10.4).

Livy is traditional in his employment of *homo* and *vir* as a rule. The former term, when not generic or intended to signify "human being", is used of the humble, the average foreigner, or the unnamed supernumerary. The latter, on the other hand, is employed in either a social or a moral sense: to indicate a person, domestic or foreign, of high rank, who is either of political or military importance, or one whose salient deeds and loyalty to Rome are so outstanding that they overcome any deficiencies of birth or nationality. *Vir* in such a case is an earned appellation of merit.

[38] *Cat.* 1.13; 2.8; 11; 3.14; 4.5; 8. *Perditus* is also used with *grex*, *manus* and *contio*, demonstrating its identification with gangs, *Sull.* 66; *Vat.* 40. It is a favourite adjective for Clodius and his friends: *Dom.* 110; *Har. Resp.* 46; *Sest.* 2; 9; 15; 60; 85; 106; and Antony: *Phil.* 5.13; 11.9; it is used with the rhetoric of *coniuratio* in *Sull.* 66 and 75: *ex multis perditorum hominum...tanta importunitas...exarsit*. I. Opelt associates *perditus* with enemies of the State, (*supra*, n.11) 143-44.

Conversely, Livy uses *homo* as a term of abuse, often with traditional Ciceronian pejorative adjectives (sometimes in direct evocation of the orator), for breakers of oaths (for selfish motives), cowards, or those whose conduct contributes to the detriment of the Republic.

It is important to make clear distinctions between the terms *homo* and *vir* in Livy, as well as in Latin prose in general, since recognition of the words' nuances may influence the interpretation of events. An example is Livy's excursus on fetial law. The fetial priest, about to declare war, enters enemy territory. Calling upon Juppiter, he imparts Rome's demands to the first *vir* he meets:

> Haec, cum fines suprascandit, haec, quiqumque ei primus vir obvius fuerit, haec portam ingrediens, haec forum ingressus, paucis verbis carminis concipiendique iuris iurandi mutatis, peragit (1.32.8).

In light of other evidence, the word *vir* in this passage indicates that the formula was uttered to the first person of consequence whom the fetial met, not just to any random individual who might be a slave or other no-account, in which case, Livy would have employed *homo*. Given the Roman penchant for order and hierarchy, it stands to reason that a matter as important as the declaration of war would not be squandered upon a member of the rabble. The distinctions between *vir* and *homo* were clear to Livy and his readers, and the historian, fully aware of their nuances, preferred the former to the latter in the episode of the fetial priest. Such a choice, for Livy, would have been a matter of instinct based upon common usage.

CHAPTER FIVE

LIVIAN LADIES: CARDBOARD CHARACTERS IN FEMININE ATTIRE

Livy's female characters are one-dimensional.[1] Reminiscent of the "little girl" with the "little curl in the middle of her forehead," when they are good, they are "*very*, very good," and when they are bad, they are not only "horrid" but also infinitely more interesting. Thus the reader is subjected to the prosaic and treacly characterizations of Lucretia, Verginia, and Cloelia, or the vividly tempestuous representations of Tanaquil, Tullia, and Sophoniba. As S.E. Smethurst has noted, Livy's only reason for inserting women into his history is to further or hinder the action taken by men.[2] Consequently, his female characters are shadowy impersonations of womanhood, subordinated to the males who are themselves ancillary to the virtues and vices that form the woof on the loom of Roman history.

While Livian women may be simple in their conception, the terminology used to describe them is not. One still finds Ciceronian rhetorical parallels in Livy's male characters: the upper class *femina*, synonymous with Roman ideals and standards of behaviour, and the foreign or low-born *mulier* who is her antithesis. The situation, however, is complicated by several factors. One is Livy's tendency to employ *femina* as an editorial word, as it were, to foreshadow *exempla* of good or bad comportment, directed towards the ladies of the aristocracy—that is, the wives of his readers, since said ladies would, presumably, be too busy at their theoretical looms to tackle Livy's multi-volumed work.[3] Another factor is Livy's use of the adjective *muliebris*, a word employed only occasionally in the rhetoric of the Republic, but one which becomes entrenched in the vocabulary of Tacitus, as do Livy's novel stereotypes: the *mulier* in the crowd; the *femina* slaughtered; or the *femina* who fights to the finish. The historian has also recycled old familiar *topoi*: the peregrine *mulier* and the foreign cult—the *mulier* bacchante. Lastly, care must be taken to distinguish between the historian's juxtaposed

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[1] S.E. Smethurst, "Women in Livy's history," *G&R* 19 (1959) 80.

[2] *Ibid.*, 82-83.

[3] *v. supra*, chapter two, p. 36; cf. S.B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (N.Y., 1975) 149. *v. infra*, n. 11.

generic terms: *viri mulieresque* and *viri feminaeque*. Differentiation between the two may affect interpretation.

The First Decade: Cherchez la Femina

Scrutinization of Livy's feminine terminology reveals a dearth of examples of *femina* in the first decade, where the word is used as a noun only nine times.[4] Although Adams records the increased employment of *femina* as the history progresses, he offers no explanation of the phenomenon, remarking only that it "takes over the emphatic function progressively," and gains "an even greater ascendancy as the emphatic word, in academic prose [of the Empire] as well as in the artificial...genres."[5] Adams' comments suggest a random usage in which *femina* is indistinguishable from *mulier* in connotation—a suggestion which, it is hoped, will be proved otherwise.

Livy's use of *femina* in the first decade is remarkable in that, except for one instance, the word appears either as a component of Livian editorializing, or as part of a commentary upon good and bad feminine behaviour.[6] Before presenting an anecdote, the historian will often make a personal comment in which he intrudes his own opinion to foreshadow the *exemplum* about to be related.[7] This technique is employed in both the Tullia and the Cloelia stories, the former being an example to be shunned by aristocratic women, and the latter, one to be emulated. For instance, before Livy tells the story of the murder of Servius Tullius, he writes that the trouble started with a *femina* who nursed a smouldering passion for a *vir alienus* (1.46.7). This is a general statement in which *femina* refers to the social class of the culprit. When Livy designates Tullia herself by gender, however, he states that she is a *mulier* driven *ab scelere* (1.47.1); her crimes are prompted by *muliebri audacia* (1.46.7).[8] Trouble arising from a *femina* is a thematic statement which

[4] *Femina* is employed as a noun in the following passages: 1.46.7; 2.13.6; 11; 4.4.10; 7.13.6; 9.19.10; 10.23.2; 10; 10.28.4. D.W. Packard, *A Concordance of Livy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968) s.v. *femina*. L. also uses the adjectival *femina* in tandem with *mas*.

[5] J.N. Adams, "Latin words for "woman" and "wife"," *Glotta* 50 (1972) 243.

[6] An exception: when the tribune Canuleius harangues the people on intermarriage with the patriciate, *femina* clearly pertains to aristocratic ladies (4.4.10).

[7] E. Haight, *The Roman use of Anecdotes in Cicero, Livy, and the Satirists*, (N.Y., 1940) 37.

[8] R.M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy, Books 1-5* (Oxford, 1965) 189. Ogilvie notes Livy's Greek word order: *ab scelere ad aliud spectare mulier scelus*, employed to emphasize *scelere* and *scelus* (1.47.1). He also notes that Tullia is presented as a Greek tragic figure.

may be interpreted: problems arose with a lady of the aristocracy.[9] The remark serves as an admonishment to any *feminae* among the wives of Livy's contemporaries who might be like-minded.

Similar editorializing can be detected in the tale of Cloelia *virgo*; this time, however, to good advantage. Livy prefaces the anecdote of the girl's heroic swim with the notice that even the *feminae* were aroused *ad publica decora* by the deeds of Mucius Scaevola (2.13.6). Livy punctuates this *exemplum* of aristocratic feminine behaviour by the comment that the Romans rewarded this *novam in femina virtutem* with an equestrian statue, indeed an innovation (2.13.11). *Feminae* of the Augustan era, take note!

The word *femina* opens and closes an episode concerning the *matronae* of the patrician and plebeian aristocracy, which serves as a model of proper and improper comportment in matters of the State religion. Livy preludes a fracas, which explodes *ex iracundia muliebri*, with a reference to *viri* and *feminae* performing the proper supplications after the Senate has decreed two days of public prayer (10.23.2-4). The central story concerns the anger of the *matronae* over the marriage of a patrician girl Verginia to a plebeian consul, and the consequent erection of the temple of Plebeian Pudicitia to serve as a counterpart to that of Patrician Pudicitia. Livy concludes the account with the remark that in the ensuing years both cults were polluted *nec matronis solum* (i.e., the married), *sed omnis ordinis feminis* (i.e., the ladies of both orders, but not necessarily married). Women figure prominently in Livy's religious anecdotes, which are seen to be not only warnings of impending ruin but also lessons specifically intended for feminine moral edification.[10] This one, which concerns a squabble among the *matronae* of the aristocracy, is directed toward the *feminae* of Livy's own day who are supposed to set an example in matters of religion for lesser *mulieres* to follow.

Three other instances of *femina* in the first decade preserve the image of the coddled, helpless lady of the upper classes. All are pejorative, but only insofar as they relate to men. The *topos* is introduced in a digression

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[9] 1.46.7; 1.58.7; 34.2.9. Feminine relations with *viri alieni* is a recurrent theme; such bode disgrace and are to be avoided: e.g., Lucretia confesses that, although she is innocent, the *vestigia viri alieni* are in her husband's bed (1.58.7). The seed planted in the first decade effloresces in book 34 during the Catonian diatribe against *universae feminae* who are disporting themselves as *agmina mulierum*, waylaying *viros alienos* (34.2.1-10); such activity is endowed with political overtones and envisioned in terms of *impotentia muliebris* (34.2.2), *coniuratio m.* (2.3), and *seditio m.* (3.8); all disguises for *luxuria m.* (4.6) and *libido m.* (6.10). The word "lady" has been used to emphasize social status.

[10] Haight (*supra*, n. 7) 55.

on Alexander the Great (9.17-19). After expounding upon the superiority of the Roman soldier, Livy reports the supposed *sententia* of the Macedonian king, that fighting Persians and *inbelles* Asians was like doing battle *cum feminis* (9.19.10). The word in this context connotes frail refinement of the sort envisioned in the Roman ideal of the aristocratic lady.[11] Similar ideas are behind chief centurion Sex. Tullius' complaint to his *imperator*, Sulpicius, that the Gauls are keeping the Roman army penned up as if they were *feminae* (7.13.6); and in Livy's assessment of the lack of Gallic staying power: in the early stages of battle Gauls fight like *viri*, but as the combat wears on they are less able than *feminae* (10.28.4).

Rare use of *femina* in the first decade subtly calls attention to the word, particularly since it is used in editorial comment. Its aristocratic overtones would, furthermore, have been evident to Livy's upper class reading public. It is only the reader of today, approaching Livian Latin by way of a modern language where the distinctions in gender terms have become blurred, who might miss the point. The nuances of *femina* are always important in Livy as they were in Cicero and Plautus, and the word, therefore, should never be dismissed in translation by use of the English all-inclusive "woman".[12] The word *femina*, like *imperium* and *auctoritas*, is perhaps best left untranslated.

The Quality of Muliebris

As we have seen, the application of the general terms *homo* and *mulier*—appropriate to the lower classes—to persons of the aristocracy was a Ciceronian device to diminish status. Livy similarly has resorted to this method upon occasion for his male characters.[13] The historian does not, however, use *mulier* with pejorative adjectives as a term of abuse. Rather, Livy relies upon the adjective *muliebris*, which, while it may be applied either to men or women, is most often appended to nouns representing undesirable behaviour in terms of his aristocratic readers.

[11] Pomeroy (*supra*, n. 3) *loc. cit.* cf. 25.36.9: Carthaginian leaders berate their men for acting like *feminae* and *pueri* in an engagement with the Romans in Spain during the Second Punic War.

[12] e.g.: *sed initium turbandi omnia a femina ortum est* (1.46.7). "It was the woman who took the first step along the road of crime." Livy, *The Early History of Rome*, tr. A. de Selincourt (Harmondsworth, 1960-71) 85. An Italian example: "Ma l'inizio di tutto lo sconvolgimento venne dalla donna." Tito Livio, *Storia di Roma dalla sua Fondazione*, tr. M. Scandola (Milan, 1963) v. 1, 335.

[13] *v. supra* chapter four, pp. 74-75.

Where *virtus* was the standard measure of Roman aristocratic deportment,[14] its opposite, which might be termed *muliebritas*—to be avoided at all costs—is epitomized by the word *muliebris.*

Livy employs *muliebris* 19 times in the first decade, which sets the tone for the rest of the history.[15] The fundamental and primitive belief in the positive nature of the masculine and in the negative character of the feminine is exhibited over and over in the ancient world in such guises as the warm virile masculine deity of the Sun (e.g., Ra, Apollo, Helios, Sarapis), and the cold chaste feminine divinity of the Moon (e.g., Artemis, Diana, Selene, Isis). A glance at the nouns that Livy modifies with *muliebris* is revealing, both in the first and in the later decades, where the word is employed an additional 23 times. Other than the positive *decus* (1.58.5) and the neutral *secus* (31.44.4), *muliebris* is used with pejorative nouns or in negative contexts, sometimes in the form of a left-handed compliment. For instance, Livy plants the idea of the undesirability of feminine rule by observing (twice) that Alba Longa was so strong that it flourished despite the *tutela muliebris* of Lavinia (1.3.1;4).[16] Livy suggests that it was only the unusually strong character of Lavinia that saved Alba Longa from what Tacitus later demonstrates to be the worst fate to befall an empire—a *muliebris tutela* (*v. infra*, chapter seven).

According to Livy, the *muliebris animus* is *imbecillus* (3.48.8). It vegetates on time-wasting trivialities such as gossip, and is affronted by trifles (6.34.7). Other traits deemed to be *muliebris* in the first decade are *pavor* (1.13.1); *audacia* (1.46.7); *ploratus* (which is also *puerilis*) (2.33.8); *timor* (2.40.2); *lacrimae* (2.40.4); *dolor* (3.48.8); *fletus* (5.40.3); *fraus* (8.18.6); and *iracundia* (10.23.4). L.W. Rutland has noted Tacitus' application of *muliebris* in contexts of unreason, lack of self-control, arrogance, and rage.[17] One can see that such ideas were well-established historical cornerstones in *Ab Urbe Condita*, where the connotations of the term range from utter impotence—as when *muliebris* modifies nouns denoting weeping—to frenzied activity—as when *muliebris* modifies nouns such as *audacia* or *iracundia*. Such characteristics are inappropri-

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[14] *v. supra*, chapter one, pp. 12-15.

[15] Packard (*supra*, n. 4) s.v. *muliebris*.

[16] Tantisper tutela muliebre—tanta indoles in Lavinia erat—res Latina et regnum avitum paternumque puero stetit... (1.3.1) Tantum tamen opes creverant, maxime fusis Etruscis ut ne morte quidem Aeneae nec deinde inter muliebrem tutelam rudimentumque primum puerilis regni movere arma aut Mezentius Etruscique aut ulli alii accolae ausi sint (1.3.4).

[17] L.W. Rutland, "Women as makers of kings in Tacitus' *Annals*," *CW* 72 (1978) 15-16.

ate to a Republic (or Principate) whose laws are carefully deliberated among its magistrates (or by its *Princeps*) and senators before being promulgated among the people. *Muliebris* is a word befitting the era of Etruscan kings; and Livy calls Tarquinius' *regnum* a *muliebre donum* since it was based not on election or confirmation by the Senate, but on the ambitious scheming of Tanaquil (1.47.10).

Livy's dim view of the *muliebre ingenium* borders on the misogynistic. Similar notions, however, echoed in Seneca and Tacitus, likely reflect the cultural norms of a male-dominated society rather than personal antipathy.[18] An illustration is Livy's depiction of women, if not as cooperative victims of rape, then as those who will forgive violence done to their person as long as it is accompanied by the right words. For instance, he notes that the Roman *viri* (!) employed *blanditias* to assure the Sabine *mulieres* that their gang ravishment was motivated *cupiditate atque amore, quae maxime ad muliebre ingenium efficaces preces sunt* (1.9.16). The relative clause represents Livian editorializing. A similar sentiment is expressed in the case of another rape victim, Lucretia. Despite Livy's protestations of her innocence, there is a minimum of sympathy for that unhappy woman, and the historian's remarks on a crime, said to be essentially one of aggression rather than passion, seem particularly callous (1.58.3):[19]

> Cum pavida ex somno mulier nullam opem, prope mortem imminentem, videret, tum Tarquinius fateri amorem, orare, miscere precibus minas, versare in omnes partes muliebrem animum.

Livy stresses the violence of the aggressor and the fear of the victim. *Mulier* rather than *femina* reflects the submissive role of the woman in the *vir/mulier* relationship. The *mulier* is the victim; she can only submit. Terror is an essential element with the Sabine women too. Livy notes that when they dared (*ausae*) to interfere between the two armies (having previously succumbed to sweet-talk and fallen in love with their attackers), they had to overcome their inherent trepidation: *victo malis muliebri pavore* (1.13.1-2).[20] Lucretia, however, does not surmount her fear; her reaction to her defilement is utterly negative. Although Balsdon cites the beneficial results of her rape and suicide,[21] self-immolation, after beg-

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[18] *v. infra*, chapter seven, p. 134.

[19] L.C. Curran, "Rape and rape victims in the *Metamorphoses*," *Arethusa* 11 (1978) 229-37.

[20] Curran notes that Ovid emphasizes the terror of the victim (*ibid.* 239).

[21] It led to the expulsion of the Etruscan kings: J.P.V.D. Balsdon, *Roman Women: their History and Habits* (London, 1962) 27.

ging one's husband and father to be *viri* and take vengeance, hardly represents positive action. Significantly, a *muliebre certamen*, or what Ogilvie calls a "best wife" contest,[22] has triggered the entire episode. Any competition that is *muliebre* is bound to end in disaster.

The *muliebres* deficiencies of the first decade prepare the reader for worse to follow: *muliebres blanditiae* (24.4.4; 27.15.11); *m. consilia* (24.22.11); *m. fletus* (25.37.10); *coniuratio m.* (34.2.3); *impotentia m.* (34.2.2); *seditio m.* (34.7.14; 3.8); and *luxuria m.* (34.6.1). It is clear that the adjective, used sparingly in Cicero but employed frequently in the historiography of the Empire,[23] is wholly pejorative; it represents a malaise that Rome can do without.

The Mulier *in the Crowd: Latin with Tears*

An historical *topos* emerges in Livy which, like *muliebris*, also finds expression in Tacitus: that of the *mulier* in the crowd.[24] Aggregations of *mulieres* are always vociferous, and according to Plautus, the *sine qua non* of *muliebris suppellectilis* is a *clarus clamor* (*Poen.* 1145-6). *Ab Urbe Condita* perpetually resounds with *muliebres* howls and ululations. The collective *mulieres* of the first decade in particular are reminiscent of a Greek tragic chorus, as they hover about the scene of the action giving forth lamentations.[25] Livy seems to be deliberately striving for this effect in the Verginia episode where he repeatedly uses the participle *circumstantes* for the silently weeping *comitatus muliebris* (3.47.3; 6):

> cum M. Claudius, circumstantibus matronis, iret ad prehendendam virginem, lamentabilisque eum mulierum comploratio excepisset...

The reader is continually reminded of their presence (3.47.8):

> Cum rapelleretur adsertor virginis a globo mulierum circumstantiumque advocatorum, silentium factum per praeconem.

Silent no longer, their emotions burst out in a profusion of *muliebris*

[22] Ogilvie (*supra*, n. 8) 221.

[23] H. Merguet, *Lexikon zu den Reden des Cicero, mit angabe sämtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1877) s.v. *muliebris*. —, *Lexikon zu den philosophischen Schriften Cicero's mit angabe sämtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1887) s.v. *muliebris*.

[24] *v. infra*, chapter seven, p. 130. Caesar also cited crowds of distressed *mulieres* in the mob-scenes of *De Bello Gallico*: 1.29.1; 51.3; 2.13.3; 16.4; 28.1; 4.14.5.

[25] Howls and ululations: 2.33.8; 5.21.11; 42.4; 22.55.3; 38.22.8; 43.10.5; and 39.8.7-8, where the *feminae* are doing the howling. J.F. Davies speculates that the tragic chorus stood in a circle. "The circle and the tragic chorus," *G&R*, ser. 2. 33 (1986) 38-46. Livy's *mulierum a globo circumstantiumque* seems to suggest this.

dolor after Verginia is stabbed, and Livy cannot refrain from adding his own acerbic interpretation of their behaviour (3.48.8):

> Sequentes clamitant matronae, eamne liberorum procreandorum condicionem, ea pudicitiae praemia esse?—cetera, quae in tali re muliebris dolor, quo est maestior imbecillo animo, eo miserabilia magis querentibus subicit.

Lugubrious keening reaches almost absurd proportions in the Coriolanus story where a large gang of women [*ingens mulierum agmen* (2.40.3); *turba mulierum* (9)] descends upon the already beleaguered general. Livy insists that he does not know whether public spirit or *muliebris timor* motivated them (40.2). The women are led by Coriolanus' mother Veturia. A *magno natu mulier*, she announces that if the *viri* with their *armis* will not defend the city, the *mulieres* will do so *precibus lacrimisque*.[26] Livy adds that Coriolanus is rendered *multo obstantior adversus lacrimas muliebres* (3). However, just as Veturia's emotional blackmail is about to pay off, and her son, *amens* and *consternatus*, is about to give in, Livy provides yet another example of female instability by informing his readers that the *mulier* changed her tactics from entreaties to anger (5). Coriolanus' wife, Volumnia, and their son join in, as does the lachrymose chorus: *fletusque ab omni turba mulierum ortus et comploratio sui patriaeque fregere tandem virum* (9). The construction of this sentence seems to imply that *muliebris fletus* and *comploratio* can break the will of even the most steadfast *vir*. As a result of the fuss, Coriolanus takes action, and the Roman *viri* without envy of their *mulieres* build the Temple of *Fortuna Muliebris* in gratitude (12).[27] *Fortuna* qualified by *muliebris* can only be a lesser fortune than *Fortuna Virilis*.

Ab Urbe Condita is splashed with women's tears, and S.B. Pomeroy has noted feminine mourning to be a Livian device to emphasize catastrophes.[28] Mark, however, that although his *matronae* may exhibit a public-spirited decorum by weeping at the funerals of great men, such as L. Iunius Brutus (2.7.4; 16.8), as soon as they collapse into unbridled grief, they are either damned as *mulieres* or said to be guilty of behaviour that is *muliebris*.[29] *Fletus* is *inutilis* as well as *muliebris*; it acts as a fifth

[26] Ogilvie notes that Veturia's speech recalls "the tensest moments in Greek tragedy." (*supra*, n. 8) 334. It is logical that, having modelled the scene in the manner of Euripides, Livy would supply his "self-pitying Hecuba" (Ogilvie, *loc. cit.*) with a tragic chorus.

[27] *Mulier* here indicates "wife", on the usage of which: Adams (*supra*, n. 5) 249-55.

[28] Pomeroy (*supra*, n. 3) 177. *Mulier* with words that denote weeping: *fletus*: 2.40.9; *3.47.3; *5.40.3; 6.3.4; *25.37.10; *ploratus*: *2.33.8; 5.42.4; 26.9.7; 29.17.16; 38.22.8; *comploratio*: 2.40.9; 3.47.6; ; *lamentatio*:22.55.3; *dolor*: *3.48.8; *consternatio*: *34.2.6; *lacrimae*: 1.29.5; 2.40.2; *4; 39.11.7. At the siege of Alba, *voces...miserabiles...mulierum* are raised in exhortation (1.29.5). * = the adjective *muliebris*.

[29] e.g., 25.37.10; 26.9.7.

column which subverts both soldier (25.37.10) and civilian (22.55.3). Strict measures must be taken against giving in to excessive grief, particularly among the *matronae* and *feminae* who must set an example for the rest of the female population (22.7.12; 55.6-8; 60.2), as is evident in Livy's accounts of the aftermaths of the battles of Trasimennus and Cannae.

Congregations of *mulieres* must be quashed. Like flocks of migrating blackbirds, *mulieres* on the move are always harbingers of trouble, and Livy employs *mulier* in the genitive plural with the nouns *agmen, comitatus* and *turba.*[30] Not only do *mulieres* wallow in grief, but they also cower in *timore, pavore, tremore,* and *terrore.* [31] Clogging the byways and major thoroughfares alike, they besiege *viros alienos* with their importunings and are symptomatic of conspiracy (34.1-2).[32] Livy depicts them as erratically peripatetic by employing *discurrere* and *procurrere* to describe their movements.[33] Throngs of *mulieres* represent the antithesis of order in a Republic based upon that virtue.

Feminae: *Helpless and Otherwise*

Two other *topoi* find a place in Roman historiography, and are encountered again in Tacitus.[34] Both concern foreign women and serve as moral lessons to their Roman counterparts. The first concerns the *femina* at the slaughter, and the second, the fighting *femina.*

It is apparent that when Livy depicts swarms of women in an emotional state of ferment, he terms them *mulieres*; should they, however, be defenseless with their children, and about to be slaughtered indiscriminately in war, he will term them *feminae.* These pitiful women and children are all foreigners, and Livy, like Cicero, normally uses *mulier* to indicate such.[35] His use of *femina* in these exceptional instances

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[30] Crowds: *agmen*: 2.40.3; 9.17.16; 29.28.3; 34.2.8; *comitatus*: 3.47.3; *turba*: 2.40.9; 29.28.3. Other crowds are accompanied by *mulier* in the genitive plural: *frequentia*: 34.1.6; 8.1; *globus*: 3.47.8; *multitudo*: 7.6.5; *volgus*: 6.25.9. Since women in crowds are anonymous, the general term *mulier* is called for; nevertheless, *feminae* do not gather in large numbers; should they by chance do so, they become *mulieres*: e.g., 22.55.3; 34.1.6; 2.8.

[31] *Mulier* or *muliebris* conjoined with words denoting fear: *pavor*: 1.13.1; 1.58.3; 5.21.11; 39 12.5; *terror*: *2.33.8; 5.21.11; *timor*: 2.40.1; *tremor*: 39.12.5.

[32] One thinks of Clodia's *mulieraria manus* waiting to entrap Caelius (*Cael.* 66), and by transferrence, Catiline's *inertes homines fortissimis viris insidiari* (Cic. *Cat. 2.10). v. supra,* chapter one, p. 22, n. 72.

[33] *Procurro*: 34.2.9; 3.6; *discurro*: 26.9.7; 39.13.12; *v. infra*, p. 90; also, chapter ten, p. 176.

[34] *v. infra*, chapter seven, pp. 127-28.

[35] *v. infra*, p. 86.

is clearly intended to coax sympathy from his readers, as is evident from the adjectives appended to *femina*: *inbellis* or *inermis*. As Cicero has demonstrated, a helpless *femina* evokes a maximum amount of sympathetic response. Thus in Spain, African deserters slaughter *inermes iuxta atque armatos, feminas pariter ac viros; usque ad infantium caedem ira crudelis pervenit* (28.20.6); and in the same country, their own men-folk cut down a *turbam feminarum puerorumque inbellem inermemque* rather than allowing them to fall into the hands of the conquering Romans (28.23.2). Similarly in Aetolia, unarmed *feminae puerique* are herded into the citadel by Roman troops (36.24.11); and *feminae puerique et alia imbellis turba* are thrown into panic and consternation by a Roman victory during the war in Asia (38.21.14).

The second *topos* depicts the barbarian *femina* battling alongside her *vir*. The fighting *femina* serves as an *exemplum* of familial solidarity in time of war. We encounter her at Lamia, where the Aetolians are holding out against the Romans: *cum viri propugnarent, feminae tela omnis generis saxaque in muros gererent* (37.5.1). Of similar courage are the Iliturgi *feminae puerique* who defend their town to the very last (28.19.13). They may be foreigners, but they are nevertheless *exempla* of courage and united resistance; they will be encountered again in Tacitus' *Germania*.

The Peregrine Mulier

As was the case with Cicero, most of Livy's foreign women are termed *mulieres*. They are usually supernumeraries in the grand pageant, although they may be instrumental in its enactment. Often *mulier* is used with an ethnic adjective with no pejorative intent, as in the case of Busa, called both *mulier Apula* (22.52.7) and *mulier Canusina* (22.54.3). Busa aided thousands of Roman escapees during the Second Punic War, and was duly rewarded by the Senate at the conclusion of the hostilities.

The wife of Mandonius (brother of the Spanish chieftain Indibilis) is said to be a *mulier* of great age. Weeping, she steps out from the throng of hostages and throws herself at the feet of Scipio in supplication. Livy employs *mulier*, the term customarily used by members of the upper classes when referring to non-Roman females. Moreover, the old woman is first perceived as one of the crowd. She, however, rises above the ordinary woman in moral worth; and Scipio remarks that she has not forgotten *matronalis decoris*. When she begs the general to secure the well-being of the daughters of Indibilis and *aliae nobilitate pari*, Livy

portrays her speaking of them "in character" as *feminae*. The old woman tells Scipio that she is beyond the *periculum iniuriae muliebris*, but the *feminae* are subject to the violence to which all women are prone at the hands of conquerors (26.49.11-15).

Rare is the individual peregrine whom Livy will honour with the title *femina*. She will have to be a woman of the highest nobility; one for whom he wishes to garner sympathy; or one who earns the appellation through patriotic deeds. Hannibal's niece belongs to the first category. Married to good king Mazaetullus, she is called *Carthaginiensis nobilis femina* (29.29.12). It is possible that some of the king's goodness has rubbed off on her since Livy observes that her husband refused to call himself *rex*.

The Spartan women, robbed by the wife of Nabis, belong to the second group. Livy terms them *feminae* in a device similar to that used in the second *actio* of the *Verrine Orations*. The word connotes "quality", and presumably the victims of the family Nabis were members of the upper classes who would have had the wherewithal worth fleecing. The noun, *feminae*, with its aristocratic associations, would render the deed particularly reprehensible in consideration of Livy's well-born reading public (32.40.10).

The Thessalian Theoxena belongs to the third category. She is promoted from *mulier* to *femina* not only by her patriotism, but also by her conspicuous accomplishment in the performance of Augustan ideology. Livy introduces Theoxena and her sister as *mulieres* (40.4.3). The historian then notes that after her husband's death, Theoxena chose to remain *univira* although many asked for her hand.[36] Nevertheless, she set aside personal wishes and married again, her second husband being her newly-widowed brother-in-law. Theoxena even reared her dead sister's children as if they were her own. Livy's admiration is unconcealed as the woman murders her family and commits suicide, rather than allow them to fall into the hands of Philip V (40.4.13). Smethurst calls her a "Greek Verginia" whose deed "arouses a storm of envy" against the Macedonian king, Rome's enemy.[37] Livy proclaims Theoxena who, without shedding a tear, hurls her dying children into the sea for freedom's sake, a *ferox femina*. The epitome of the *androphron gyne*,[38] Theoxena, like a Euripidean heroine, has transcended her innate maternal instincts. In preferring

[36] G. Clark discusses the ideal of the *univira*, "Roman women," *G&R*, ser. 2:1, 28.2 (1981) 193. Augustus ruled that a widow had to remarry within three years (Suet. *Aug*. 34).

[37] Smethurst (*supra*, n. 1) 85.

[38] Ogilvie (supra, n. 8) 188.

death to tyranny, Theoxena may have been *ferox*, but she remains, in Livy's view, a *femina*.

Other foreign *mulieres* are less admirable, and they remain *mulieres*. One, a *mulier...Campana*, is the *scortum* of one of the Capuan deserters and also informs upon them to the Romans (26.12.16-20). Another perfidious woman is the *muliercula* of the captain of the citadel at Tarentum; with *blanditiis muliebribus*, she entices him into betraying the city to Fabius (27.15.9-11). A third is equally opprobrious: a *famosa mulier* from Placentia, whose ruinous passion for Quinctius Flamininus prompts him to brag about the number of captives he is about to behead. At the instigation of his bloodthirsty mistress, Flamininus has one of the prisoners hauled into the banquet and summarily decapitated in front of his guests (29.43.2).

The words *peregrina mulier* themselves were, in Livy's day, steeped in odium, Rome having been recently delivered from the threat of Cleopatra. Pliny writes that her name was synonymous with *regina meretrix* (*NH* 9.119). Spartan Helen, in the words of Horace, was also a *mulier peregrina* who had brought about the ruin of a great city-state (*Odes* 3.3.18-20). Livy's version of the foreign *regina* is the Etruscan Tanaquil, who has been envisioned as a true virago; and there are those who believe that her portrayal in Livy served as a model for Tacitus' Livia.[39] Livy may have memorialized Lucumo as a *fortis ac strenuus vir* who had risen to the top of the political heap (1.34.6), but he is less sympathetic to the Etruscan's wife, whose *exemplum* is deficient in the virtues idealized in the Augustan age.[40] Driven by ambition, Tanaquil ignores love of country, abandons her people, and marries a man who is both an *advena* and *humilior*, dispised by her compatriots (1.34.3-5). As Smethurst notes, Livy holds his approval in reserve;[41] one of his methods for doing so is his use of gender terms. Since Tanaquil is well-born (*summa loco nata*), one would expect her to be characterized as a *femina* or a *matrona*. Instead, she is stigmatized as a *peregrina mulier* (1.47.6), who, moreover, serves as inspiration for the *muliebres furiae* of the demented Tullia (7).[42]

As *virtus* embodies the courage and steadfastness which are to be

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[39] M.P. Charlesworth, "Livia and Tanaquil," *CR* 41 (1927) 55-57.

[40] Her marriage to an *advena* of humble birth would have been frowned upon by Augustus (Suet. *Aug*. 40.3), as would her active participation in public life. Cf. Suet. *Aug*. 64.2. Smethurst (*supra*, n. 1) 81.

[41] *Ibid., loc. cit.*

[42] Ogilvie believes that Livy intended *muliebribus instinctus furiis* to remind his readers of Orestes' hounding by the furies (*supra*, n. 8) 190.

emulated by the Roman *vir*, *muliebris* implies cowardice and mutability worthy of foreigners. Livy makes this point repeatedly. Tanaquil has bestowed her *muliebre donum* of *regnum* first upon Tarquinius Priscus and then upon Servius Tullius, who, as an old man, falls prey to another *mulier*, his daughter Tullia (1.47.1). A variation of the *topos* appears in book 24: the nonegenarian Adranadorus, regent of Syracuse, succumbs *dies noctesque* to the *muliebribus blanditiis* of his wife, Damarata, daughter of the late tyrant Hiero (24.4.4). Livy characterizes Damarata's exhortations to seize the tyranny and resist the Romans at all costs as *muliebria consilia* (24.22.11). Like their Etruscan predecessors, both Adranadorus, swayed by womanish importunings, and Damarata, who offered them, meet violent ends (24.24.4; 25.10).[43]

The Peregrina Mulier *and the Foreign Cult*

Feminine participation in foreign cults is a recurrent theme for Livy.[44] Such groups were pernicious menaces, particularly during wartime.[45] Queen Tanaquil might be regarded as the "horrible *exemplum*" of the sort of woman who partakes in non-Roman rites. Besides *peregrina mulier*, Livy brands her *perita...caelestium prodigiorum mulier* (1.34.9). Feminine interpretation of the *omina* was a foreign custom which had no place in the religious life of the Roman *matrona*. Omens belonged to the *arcana imperii* of the pontifices and augurs, to be properly evaluated after due consultation of the Sibylline books. The *omina* were an instrument of power, employed by the Senate as an excuse to justify potentially unpopular policies.[46] They were not open to speculation by amateurs,[47] particularly women who occupied a subordinate role in the Roman State religion.[48] Livy makes it evident that female divination was an Etruscan practice (1.34.9). One may consider it implicit that such a

[43] Another peregrine, the Macedonian Perseus, possesses a *muliebris animus* as he resorts to *fraus* and *scelus* (typically *muliebres* failings) to usurp Philip's throne (40.5.3). It is only Roman *clementia* which spares him a fate similar to that of Adranadorus and Damarata (45.7.5).

[44] e.g., 25.1.6-12; 26.9.7; 34.3.8; 39.8-19. Cato viewed foreign cults to be an excuse for women to make trouble (34.3.8).

[45] C. Hermann, "Le role judiciaire et politique des femmes sous la République romaine," *Collection Latomus* 67 (1964) 56.

[46] Such as living burial (22.57.6).

[47] Ogilvie cites the emphatic use of *mulier* at the end of the sentence and notes that Tanaquil behaves like another foreign queen, Dido; he adds that amateur diviners needed the aid of a professional soothsayer (*supra*, n. 8) 144.

[48] René Pichon, "Le role religieux des femmes dans l'ancienne Rome," *Paris, Musée Guimet: Annales, Bibliothèque de Vulgarisation* 39 (1912) 81.

custom was *non patrio more*, and therefore to be shunned by Roman *feminae*. Tanaquil's dabblings in divination would qualify her for the term, *mulier*, even were she not a foreigner.

The problem of *externa religio* erupted during the middle years of the Hannibalic War when *mulierum turbae* surged through the forum and up to the Capitoline in the wake of petty priests and sidewalk prophets (25.1). The episode to which Livy devotes an entire chapter, seems to foreshadow the Bacchanalian Conspiracy.[49] Both accounts have common elements: the cults are foreign, secret, originally run by *sacrificuli ac vates*, who have drifted in from the country; they appeal to women, and meet at night. A second outburst occurs when Hannibal is at the gates of Rome in 211 (26.9.7-8):[50]

> Ploratus mulierum non ex privatis solum domibus exaudiebatur, sed undique matronae in publicum effusae circa deum delubra discurrunt crinibus passis aras verrentes, nixae genibus, supinas manus ad caelum ac deos tendentes orantesque ut urbem Romanam e manibus hostium eriperent...

The *mulier* who participates in foreign cults and the *femina* who upholds the ideals of the Roman State religion are contrasted in the Bacchanalian affair through the *personae* of Hispala Faecinia and Sulpicia. Livy seems

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[49] C. Hermann sees the problem of foreign cults to be one of public order rather than religious intolerance (*supra*, n. 45) *loc. cit.* State piacular rites were strictly orchestrated; various groups, including the *matronae*, were assigned specific tasks: J.H.W. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979) 6-10.

[50] The episode may well represent a manifestation of proto-Bacchanalianism: Livy indicates that the cult had been on hand for many years before it was suppressed (39.12.6-7). *Matronae discurrentes*, brushing the altars *crinibus passis*, are behaving in a suspiciously bacchanalian manner which is recalled in the events of 186 (39.13.12):

> Matronas Baccharum habitu crinibus sparsis cum ardentibus facibus decurrere ad Tiberim, demissasque in aquam faces, quia vivum sulpur cum calce insit, integra flamma efferre.

R.A. Bauman denies links between cultic outbursts of 213 and the later furor of 186, on grounds that measures taken against the former were aimed "exclusively at cult practices carried out in public." "*Vim fieri veto:* apropos of a recent work," *Antichthon* 7 (1962) 69. He has overlooked a passage in which Livy specifically states that the cultists of 213 had been practicing rites behind closed doors, indicating that they had done so before bringing them out into the open (25.1.7):

> nec iam in secreto modo atque intra parietes abolebantur Romani ritus, sed in publico etiam ac foro Capitolioque mulierum turba erat nec sacrificantium nec precantium deos patrio more.

Livy reiterates implications of secrecy in 26.9.7, where there is a renewed outburst. He is clearly indicating that *externa religio*, which had made its debut in the wake of Hannibal's march through Italy, had burst out in the climate of hysteria. Others believe the events of 213 to be an early manifestation of Bacchic rites: e.g. L. Labruna (cited by Bauman, p. 69), *Vim fieri veto: alle radice di una ideologia*, Scuola di perfezionamento in diritto civile dell' Università di Camerino (1971) 70 sqq.; A. Bruhl, *Liber Pater: Origine et expansion du culte dionysiaque à Rome et le monde romain* (Paris, 1953) 96; C. Gallini, *Protesta ed integrazione nella Roma antica* (Bari, 1970) 31.

indebted to Plautus' *Bacchides* for the former, who is a familiar figure: an older woman, a freed slave, prostitute, and lover of the teen-aged Aebutius, a boy of good family (*v. supra*, chapter two, p. 45). Hispala, whom Livy repeatedly designates a *mulier*,[51] hysterically denounces the Bacchic cult to the noble Sulpicia, who, in contrast, epitomizes the decorum and dignity inherent in the Roman *matrona*. She is the mother-in-law of the consul A. Postumius Albinus, and Livy reiterates that she is a *femina gravissima*.[52]

Smethurst sees Hispala to be an exception to Livy's pasteboard female characters: her portrayal is called "vivid", and it is likened to that of a courtesan in New Greek Comedy, although the freedwoman is said to lack "the poise of a Menandrian heroine;" Smethurst, nevertheless, enrolls Hispala among Livy's "good" women, citing her "selfless love" for Aebutius as motivation for turning State's evidence.[53] Smethurst's estimation, however, falls short of the mark, for Hispala's character, although better drawn than most of the other Livian women, is nevertheless a literary *topos*, the "whore with the heart of gold", concocted, whether by Livy or his sources, to illustrate the attraction of the cult for foreigners and members of the servile orders. The woman's dubious background is evident in her very name. Hispala implies Spanish origin, while Faecinia, although an actual Roman name, derives from *faex-faecis* and suggests the degradation of one born in the squalour of servitude.[54] Moreover, Livy terms her *scortum nobile* (39.9.5).[55] Though Balsdon, in a "free translation" renders this a "courtesan of

[51] 39.10.2; 12.5; 13.1; 19.6; with *libertina*: 39.13.2.

[52] *gravem feminam*: 39.11.4; *tam nobilem et gravem feminam*: 12.2; *talis femina*: 12.4; *gravissima femina* 13.3. There is a progression of laudatory adjectives.

[53] Smethurst (*supra*, n. 1) 82.

[54] J. Perin (*Onomasticon Totius Latinitatis* [Padua, 1913] s.v. Faecius) writes that the name Faecinius derives from the Greek *phaikos*, equivalent of *splendidus*. Common usage, however, would more likely associate it with *faex-faecis*, denoting dregs or sediment. Meanings range from cosmic effluvium (Lucretius, 5.497) to must of the wine (Hor. *Odes*, 3.15.16; Columella, *Rust*. 12.47.6). Pliny (*NH* 14.27) tells of the Faecinian grape, which he deems *ignobilis*, and Columella, similarly, observes that wines from certain grapes are called Faecinian for producing great amounts of sediment (3.2.14). *Faex*, by transferrence, is employed by Cicero to connote the social dregs (*Att*. 2.1.8). The English "feces" derives from *faex*, and Cicero gave the word similar meaning when he noted that Cato thought he was living in Plato's republic instead of upon Romulus' dungheap (*Ib*.). Juvenal (3.61) also uses *faex* negatively. Apropos to Livy's Hispala is a verse in Horace (*Odes*, 1.35.25-28), which associates *faex* with the rabble and the *meretrix*:

> at volgus infidum et meretrix retro/periura cedit, diffugiunt cadis/cum faece siccatis amici/ferre iugum pariter dolosi.

Latin usage seems to have lost sight of *phaikos*. The name was therefore likely to evoke visions of a Spanish harlot.

[55] The figure is an oxymoron, and not complimentary.

distinction,"[56] it is clear that Livy had something less gentlemanly in mind, *meretrix* being the genteel term for the followers of that venerable profession.[57]

Hispala is a denizen of the Aventine, a mixed neighbourhood outside the *pomoerium*, inhabited alike by the respectable and the reprehensible: plebeian families, foreign merchants (and their cults), freedmen, runaway slaves, and other *quisquilia*.[58] Its high walls and dense laurel groves harbour exotic religious rites of the sort in which the penitent Hispala once participated.[59] An ex-Bacchante, she has practiced foul nocturnal sacrifices. It is therefore logical that she corrupts the young and behaves in an unseemly manner.[60] There are those who choose to believe that Hispala and Aebutius were real personages.[61] They may well have been, but their historicity has become so smothered in webs of *topoi* that the truth is almost unrecognizable. More to the point is Livy's preservation of those *topoi*. As R.M. Ogilvie observes, Livy not only used secondary sources, but he also reshaped events; furthermore, "scenes of moral

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[56] Balsdon (*supra*, n. 21) 37.

[57] S. Lilja, *Roman Elegists' Attitudes towards Women* (Helsinki, 1965) 36.

[58] A. Merlin, *L'Aventin dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1906) 218; the quarter always had a bad reputation for foreign cults. The temple of Diana (a Nemi import) was the haunt of runaway slaves: W.W. Fowler, *Roman Festivals* (London, 1899) 203.

[59] *Lauretum*: D.Hal. 3.43; Pliny, *NH* 15.138; Merlin viewed the Aventine as a source of unrest with its large foreign population which imported its own cults (*supra*, n. 58) 240. Livy's Cato implies that the district was in peril of seizure by droves of infuriated women (34.7.14).

[60] *v. supra*, chapter two, p. 45.

[61] H. Balkestein deduces Hispala's historicity on the basis of Liv. 39.19.3-5, opining that Livy must have seen the actual *s.c.*. "De figuur van Fecenia Hispala," *Hermeneus* 15.2 (1942) 19, 22. D.W.L. van Son agrees, noting that "*scortum nobile*" is a genuine expression of the 2nd century B.C., and not a later projection: *Livius behandeling van de Bacchanalia* (Amsterdam, 1969) 112. Neither argument is convincing. Balsdon believes in Hispala, writing that Livy has recorded the terms of the *S.C.* (39.18.8-9) with "complete accuracy," and that it would be "sheer willfulness to discard his account of the decree by which the two informants were rewarded." (*supra*, n. 21) 37. While it is true that Livy's version does echo the phraseology of the decree, *CIL* 1.^{2} 581, it does not reproduce it with verbal accuracy. Moreover, the decree's authenticity does not guarantee that Livy ever saw it, or one recording the Senate's reward to Hispala and Aebutius. The story could have been picked up from an annalist. J.A. North notes Livy's account to be based upon very tendentious sources reflecting hostile tradition. It is therefore open to much scepticism. "Religious toleration in republican Rome," *PCPS* 25 (1975) 87. As for *scortum nobile*, van Son provides no ancient evidence for his hypothesis. Antiquity of the term is no measure of Hispala's historicity; it only indicates that Livy may be echoing the words of an earlier source. He may well have coined the oxymoron for ironic effect, emulating Plautus, who gave his *meretrices* ludricously suggestive names; e.g., Gymnasium in *Cistellaria*. *Scortum nobile* is Livy's way of saying that the bawd-next-door had "class." While Faecinius is an actual Roman name, among several inscriptions bearing the *nomen*, none are from the city of Rome itself. All date from the first century A.D. and only demonstrate that an L. Faecinius, or more than one, manumitted a number of slaves: *CIL* 5.3398; 9.2282; 14.355; 14.997. W. Schulze, *Zur Geschichte lateinischen Eigennamen* (Berlin, 1904) s.v. Faecinius.

episodes were designed to bring out the characters of the leading figures."[62] This is true in the Bacchanalian Conspiracy. Hispala Faecinia, real or not, is stereotypical of the average bacchante, and one cannot fail to perceive an implicit contrast in the antithetical portraits of the *mulier*, Hispala and the *femina*, Sulpicia. However golden-hearted, Hispala is still a *scortum* and seducer of the young. Her emotional outbursts befit one of her class as well as a self-confessed ex-practitioner of a foreign cult. Significantly, although Hispala is rewarded by the Senate who decrees that any *vir* who marries her will not lose his status, Livy persists in calling her a *mulier* (39.19.6). The edict demonstrates the stigma attached to the marriage between a *vir ingenuus* and a *libertina* (to say nothing of a *scortum*), who, despite the removal of a social blot, will never be regarded as a *femina*.[63] Sulpicia, on the other hand, is the epitome of Roman womanhood. A patrician *matrona* of advanced age, she is the quintessence of *gravitas*, *pietas* and *sapientia*: a *femina* in every sense of the word, who upholds the pristine values of the State religion.

There were three priorities ingrained into the aristocratic tradition: *respublica*, family, and the individual;[64] and the greatest of these was *respublica*. Thus when Aebutia is about to inform upon her late brother's wife Duronia (Aebutius' mother), setting the interests of the Republic before family considerations, she is portrayed as a *proba et antiqui moris femina* (39.11.5). Note, however, how Livy, perhaps unconsciously, changes his terminology when the aunt fails to live up to these ideals; when she dissolves into tears upon cross-examination by Postumius, Livy resorts to the word *mulier* (39.11.7).

Her ex-sister-in-law Duronia is also a *mulier*. Since she is of the plebeian aristocracy,[65] one would expect her to be either a *matrona* or a *femina*. She is, however, a confirmed bacchante, and consequently a *mulier*. Not only has she succumbed to a degenerate cult, but she has also even attempted to recruit her adolescent son into its mysteries (39.9-11). Such disgraceful actions make her unworthy of terms of respect.[66]

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[62] R.M. Ogilvie, *Roman Literature and Society* (Brighton, 1980) 156.

[63] A.M. Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1928) 59.

[64] D.C. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge, 1961) 27.

[65] The widow of an *eques equo publico*, she remarried a Sempronius (39.9.2). By furnishing her personal statistics, Livy seems to imply that the cult had infiltrated the plebeian aristocracy. Cf. C. Gallini (*supra*, n. 50) 32-36. Duronia represents what journalists call a "composite": a typical Bacchante.

[66] *v. infra*, pp. 179-80: Petronius' spoof on Bacchanalianism.

The Juxtaposition of Vir/Mulier *and* Vir/Femina

Throughout *Ab Urbe Condita*, Livy has occasion to refer to men and women collectively. Sometimes he employs *viri mulieresque*, and at others, *viri feminaeque*, particularly in the latter decades. It is important to distinguish between the two, for their employment is not a random one, as Adams seems to suggest.[67] When Livy couples *viri* with *mulieres*, he is referring to men and women in general; when, however, he joins *viri* with *feminae*, he has something more specific in mind. The latter combination signifies members of the upper classes and is often used in contexts where a specific message is intended for Livy's aristocratic reading public.[68]

The general nature of *viri/mulieres* is indicated repeatedly. For instance, after her father's murder, the curses of the populace follow Tullia wherever she goes: *exsecrantibus quacumque incedebat invocantibusque parentum furias viris mulieribusque* (1.59.13).[69] *Viri* and *mulieres* are often identified with the multitude, as are those who cover M. Curtius' body with fruit after he has plunged into a pit in an act of *devotio* (7.6.5); or the throngs of spectators who pour out of the fields and pastures to line the road as the army of G. Claudius Nero passes by (27.45.7).

According to Livy, the *multitudo* at the city gates waiting for news of the battle of Trasimennus consisted *maior prope mulierum quam virorum* (22.7.11). There is a distinct difference, however, when Livy informs his readers that *metus* and *necessitas* forced even *feminas* to mix with the *turba virorum* in the forum after the battle of Cannae (22.60.2). Nothing prevented an ordinary *mulier* from going downtown; however, the *femina*'s place was in the *domus*. Livy is referring to ladies of the aristocracy.

When a disorganized crowd mills about the city's shrines, imploring the gods for forgiveness after an outburst of dire prodigies, Livy terms them *viri* and *mulieres* (3.5.14). On the other hand *viri* and *feminae*, the ladies and gentlemen of the upper classes, offer the proper supplications at piacular rites organized by the State.[70]

[67] Adams (*supra*, n. 5) 243.

[68] Cicero rarely uses male and female gender terms together; when he does, one can see the general nature of *viri* and *mulieres*, and the one time in which it is employed, the specific of *viri* and *feminae*: *ut non modo omnium generum, aetatum, ordinum omnes viri ac mulieres...viderentur...laetari* (*Pis.* 52); *omnes te di homines...viri mulieres, liberi servi oderunt* (*Phil.* 13.45); *omnes viri, mulieres...in iudicium vocantur* (*Cluent.* 148); *quae (migratio commutatioque vitae) in claris viris et feminis dux in caelum soleret esse* (*Tusc.* 1.27). *Claris* accents the status of the terms. Haight (*supra*, n. 7) 37.

[69] *Quacumque* demonstrates the generality of the expression.

[70] Pomeroy (*supra*, n. 3) 180.

The *viri* and *feminae* in the debate over the repeal of the Lex Oppia are equally aristocratic.[71] The issue is *luxuria muliebris* (34.6.2), specifically the possession of gold, riding in closed carriages and the wearing of purple and brightly coloured garments. These problems would hardly apply to the lower classes. Although C. Hermann, taking Cato's *universae feminae* literally, would have one believe that the matter was part of an anti-feminist reaction,[72] it is evident that the Lex Oppia was a sumptuary law which would hardly be applicable to the multitudes. Livy uses *universae feminae* as an element of Catonian hyperbole. The *feminae* in question are behaving in a manner that is thoroughly *muliebris*, but despite their faults, they remain *feminae*—ladies of the aristocracy.[73]

Acceptance of the differences between *viri/mulieres* and *viri/feminae* may affect interpretation of Livy's lengthy presentation of the Bacchanalian Conspiracy, where both expressions are used.[74] Where, on the one hand, Livy is at pains to demonstrate the ubiquitous nature of a cult which, he states, comprised *alterum iam prope populum* (39.13.14), he is also clearly emphasizing the part taken by the members of the upper classes. This can be inferred from allusions to vice *in his nobiles quosdam viros feminasque*, who numbered among the *multitudinem ingentem* (39.13.14), and by the Senate's preoccupation over the possible involvement of some of its own members (39.14.4).

A step-by-step analysis of the passages in which Livy employs gender terms is instructive. He commences with generalities, explaining that at first the rites were known only to a few, but that subsequently they spread among the public: *Initia erant, quae primo paucis tradita sunt, deinde*

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[71] The extreme length of the episode which Briscoe terms a "minor question" shows that Livy has used it as an *exemplum* for his aristocratic readers. J. Briscoe, *A Commentary on Livy: Books 34-37* (Oxford, 1981) 39.

[72] Hermann (*supra*, n. 45) 52.

[73] One may surmise that Cato's "frequent harangues" about the *avaritia* and *luxuria* of *feminae* and *viri* (34.4.1) were directed at those of social status, since avarice and luxury hardly concerned the lower orders:

> Saepe me querentem de feminarum, saepe de virorum nec de privatorum modo sed etiam magistratuum sumptibus audistis, diversisque duobus vitiis, avaritia et luxuria, civitatem laborare, quae pestes omnia magna imperia everterunt.

Livy has Cato reiterate *mulier* and *muliebris* with pejoratives, even though he makes it clear that he is referring to *feminae*. Valerius, however, offering rebuttal, speaks only of *matronae* and *feminae*, except in passages where he is paraphrasing Cato. While Cato has castigated *feminae* repeatedly for *muliebres* failings, Valerius lauds *decus matronale...pudorem, sanctitatemque feminarum* (34.6.8). Cato: *coniuratione muliebri* (34.2.3); *consternatio muliebris* (34.2.6); *seditioni...muliebri* (34.3.8); *luxuriam muliebrem* (34.4.6). He also mentions ancestral *omnia muliebria iura* (34.3.1), designed to restrain *licentia* among females. Cato's use of *femina*: 34.2.1; 7; 11; 14; 4.1.

[74] North calls Livy's account contradictory and inadequate (*supra*, n. 61) 86.

vulgari coepta sunt per viros mulieresque (39.8.5). The word *vulgari* indicates that *viri mulieresque* is a general term.

Livy next uses *feminae* in an expository passage that contains the definitive anti-Bacchanalian rhetoric. The upper class term is used for shock-value to emphasize that the excesses of the cult were practiced not only by the disreputable, but also by the respectable. Livy first employs the adjectival *femina* (always used in tandem with *mas*), which prepares the readers for the *feminae* (aristocratic ladies) and *ingenui* who are committing *stupra promiscua*.[75] Since *stuprum* was a crime that applied only to the free-born,[76] *stupra promiscua ingenuorum feminarumque* seems redundant unless Livy is emphasizing that the cult, which he says was brought to Rome by an obscure Greek, had, like a cancer, spread to the upper strata of Roman society.[77]

Livy emphasizes the indulgence of *viri* and *feminae* in the most degenerate aspects of the cult; their presence renders the Bacchanalian rites even more obscene (39.13.10-12):

> Ex quo in promiscuo sacra sint et permixti viri feminis, et noctis licentia accesserit, nihil ibi facinoris, nihil flagitii praetermissum. Plura virorum inter sese quam feminarum esse stupra. Si qui minus patientes, dedecoris sint et pigriores ad facinus, pro victimis immolari. Nihil nefas ducere, hanc summam inter eos religionem esse. Viros, velut mente capta, cum iactatione fanatica corporis vaticinari; matronas Baccharum habitu crinibus sparsis cum ardentibus facibus decurrere ad Tiberim, demissasque in aquam faces, quia vivum sulpur cum calce insit, integra flamma efferre.

J.A. North believes the membership to have been widely based, cutting across class lines. He postulates groups similar to *collegia*, with both free and slave participants.[78] Livy seems to be presenting the cult in this light when he relates that Hispala, as a young *ancilla*, was recruited into the Bacchic mysteries by her *domina* (39.12.6). While a

[75] Additae voluptates religioni vini et epularum, quo plurium animi illicerentur. Cum vinum animos incendisset, et nox et mixti feminis mares, aetatis tenerae maioribus, discrimen omne pudoris exstinxissent, corruptelae primum omnis generis fieri coeptae, cum ad id quisque, quo natura pronioris libidinis esset, paratam voluptatem haberet. Nec unum genus noxae, stupra promiscua ingenuorum feminarumque erant, sed falsi testes, falsa signa testamentaque et indicia ex eadem officina exibant; venena indidem intestinaeque caedes, ita ut ne corpora quidem interdum ad sepulturam exstarent. Multa dolo, pleraque per vim audebantur. Occulebat vim quod prae ululatibus tympanorumque et cymbalorum strepitu nulla vox quiritantium inter stupra et caedes exaudiri poterat (39.8.6-8).

[76] P. Csillag, *The Augustan Laws on Family Relations* (Budapest, 1976) 179.

[77] The ignoble nature of the Greek, however, must not be taken seriously, as it probably reflects Senatorial attempts to associate the group with foreigners and the lower classes.

[78] North (*supra*, n. 61) 87. Gruen sees the servile aspect to be negligible: *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy* in *Cincinnati Classical Studies*, N.S., vol. 7 (Leiden, 1990) 60.

group that ignored class divisions would be especially obnoxious to the Senate for whom the State religion represented a means for keeping public order,[79] one must be cautious with this interpretation. Promiscuous mingling of the classes was a favorite *topos* of *coniuratio*, and hints of collusion between the aristocracy and the servile orders may pertain to Senatorial propaganda designed to raise the spectre of a slave revolt.[80]

When the consul, Postumius, speaks before the people, he is careful to refer to the Bacchanalians only in the most general terms: *multa milia hominum...mulierum magna pars* (39.15.8-9). When he dwells upon the lurid practices of cult members, he does so in a cursory manner: *deinde simillimi feminis mares, stuprati et constupratores, fanatici, vigiliis, vino strepitibus clamoribusque nocturnis attoniti* (39.15.9). Note that Postumius uses the adjectival *feminis/mares*, vague indicators of gender that are regularly applied to animals and infants of uncertain sex.[81] Postumius asks, rhetorically: *Quales primum nocturnos coetus, deinde promiscuos mulierum ac virorum esse creditis*? (12) The word order emphasizes *nocturnos coetus*. It is significant that *feminis* and *mulierum* precede *mares* and *virorum*; almost invariably the masculine terms precede the feminine. By putting the expressions back-to-front, Postumius is hinting that the women prodded the men onto the primrose path of procacity. Livy has made similar assertions about Duronia and Aebutius (39.11.1-2), as well as Paculla Annia and her two sons, Minius and Herrenius Cerrinius (13.9).[82] Again, *mulieres* and *viri*, whatever the word-order, is the general term; there are no *viri/feminae* in the consul's speech. Since the *patres conscripti* themselves were disturbed about the possible incrimination of their own *adfines* (14.4),[83] Postumius has soft-pedaled aristocratic involvement when delivering an oration before the people (39.15). Livy, however, in presenting his account of the affair to his Augustan-age readers, was under no such constraints, and indeed he has used *viri* and *feminae* in tandem throughout the episode to illustrate the erring ways of the post-Hannibalic War aristocracy, who had not learned the lesson on which he has been harping since book 21: proper respect for the State religion.

A final passage demonstrates the interplay between the general *viri/*

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[79] Gallini (*supra*, n. 50) 34. Gruen believes that the Senate suppressed the cult in 186 in order to maintain their control over "the regulation of religion." (*supra*, n. 78) 75.

[80] As does Cicero in the Catilinarian speeches.

[81] Packard (*supra*, n. 4) s.v. *mas*, in its various cases.

[82] North (*supra*, n. 61) 89.

[83] van Son (*supra*, n. 61) 198; an astute observation in a book largely uncritical of Livy's version of the events of 186.

mulieres and the particular *viri/feminae*: the denunciation and condemnation of the conspirators (39.17.5-6).

> Multi ea nocte, quae diem insecuta est, quo in contione res palam facta est, custodiis circa portas positis fugientes a triumviris comprehensi et reducti sunt; multorum delata nomina. Quidam ex iis viri feminaeque mortem sibi consciverunt. Coniurasse supra septem milia virorum ac mulierum dicebantur.

The number 7000 calls for the general term in the genitive plural. Although Livy might use *viri* and *feminae*, partly for variation, the terms serve to call attention to those persons who at least had the grace to take an honourable way out. Their identification with the plebeian elite may be postulated from Livy's next words. He alludes to the plebeian leaders of the cult, one of whom, Minius Cerrinius, was removed to Campania under armed escort with express orders to prevent him from comitting suicide (39.17.6-7; 19.2).

Once again, Livy employs the general terms, *viri/mulieres*, in reference to the condemned conspirators: *Magna vis in utraque causa virorum mulierumque fuit. Mulieres damnatas cognatis*...(39.18.6). General terminology is appropriate for the condemned (who no longer merit terms of respect) and reflects Ciceronian usage.[84]

The text of the original *S.C. de Bacchanalibus* (*CIL* I.^{2} 581) employs the general terms, *viri* and *mulieres* (10; 12; 19; 20). Livy, however, has made no attempt to mirror the terminology of the *senatusconsultum*. Although one might attribute his use of *viri/mulieres* and *viri/feminae* to *variatio*, in light of the evidence in Cicero and in Livy's own history, where *vir* and *femina* are distinguished from *homo* and *mulier*, one must consider the probability that the collective terms also had sharp distinctions; that when Livy wrote of the activities of *viri* and *feminae*, he meant to distinguish them from the average *viri* and *mulieres*.

Livy's feminine terminology is specialized. Although he resorts to familiar patterns exhibited in the rhetoric of Cicero, he establishes new paradigms which become part of the historiographical vocabulary. This is indicated by his failure to use the Ciceronian *mulier* with pejorative adjectives, and his tendency to employ *femina* in reference to women of the upper classes, whose bad behaviour, nevertheless, he characterizes as *muliebris*. Livy's tearful *mulier* in the crowd will be encountered

[84] Although Cicero has no occasion to refer to condemned persons collectively, when he does so individually, he uses *homo* and *mulier*: *mulier amens...condemnaretur*: *Cluent*. 187; *hominem...condemnat*: *Verr*. 2.22; *hominem condemnaret*: 74; *hominem omnium nequissimum...condemnatum* 75; cf. *Phil*. 2.56; *damnata*, with *mulier*: *Cluent*. 32; *homo*: *Verr*. 3.90; 5.10; 11.

again in Tacitus, as will the valiant barbaric *femina*, who will be metamorphosized into the noble savage of the *Agricola*, *Germania*, and the *Annales*.

Although many of the rhetorical features displayed in the speeches of Cicero find their way into historiography, Livy seems to have transcended the limitations of *mulier* with pejoratives, supplanting it by *muliebris*, an adjective virtually ignored by Cicero in his invective. *Muliebris* embodied all the negative characteristics that were to be shunned by both men and women in a Republic that prized *virtus*. In emphasizing *muliebris* as a term of abuse, Livy has opened the door of history to the *atrox femina* of the Roman empire.

CHAPTER SIX

VELLEIUS PATERCULUS: *HISTORICUS PATRIOTICUS*

Until very recently, scholarly opinion of Velleius Paterculus as an historian was so low, that were a Gallup Poll of Ancient Historians to be taken, the Tiberian author would be included in the category, "Other."[1] According to J. Hellegouarc'h, Velleius has suffered from comparisons to Livy and Tacitus, confrontations from which he has emerged scathed, being dismissed as a perjured panegyrist and trafficker in rhetoric; both charges having led to his conviction as a "minor historian."[2] Now, however, thanks to the advocacy of scholars such as A.J. Woodman, the case of the only extant historian between Livy and Tacitus has been reopened.[3] Woodman has argued that Velleius is a "patriotic historian", writing in the grand old tradition of Sallust and Livy, his final 38 chapters on Tiberius being the logical conclusion of a work intended to show that great events of the past were foreshadowing an even greater present.[4] Woodman has furthermore demonstrated the absurdity of the complaint upon the rhetorical nature of the opus, noting that "all ancient historians, without exception" dealt in literary and dramatic *topoi*, and that their writings must be "de-rhetorized" in order to be evaluated historically.[5]

Velleius conceived a composition of broad scope that dates back to the primordial dawning of Athenian history. In order to cope with the breadth of his theme, he presents his readers with a "portrait gallery" of character sketches in which great events have been reduced to a series of individual actions.[6] Like Livy, Velleius is dealing in historical *exempla*.[7]

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[1] J. Hellegouarc'h, "L'histoire romaine de Velleius Paterculus," in *ANRW* 32.1, 404-5.

[2] *Ibid.*, 405, 419, 436; cf. *Velleius Paterculus, The Tiberius Narrative (2.94-131)*, ed. and intro. by A.J. Woodman (Cambridge, 1977) ix; 54-56.

[3] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

[4] *Ibid.*, 35; 38. Woodman notes that the final chapters in *Ab Urbe Condita* were about Augustus' career. Since Livy's work is more in-depth than that of Velleius, and since his final chapters on Augustus are missing, the Augustan perspective of the work passes unnoticed.

[5] Woodman (*supra*, n. 2) 35-36.

[6] Hellegouarc'h (*supra*, n. 1) 420.

[7] Velleius' work is often compared to Valerius Maximus' compendium of anecdotes, facts and sayings, published in 31, book nine of which is dedicated to Tiberius. Also a patriotic work, its emphasis is on the deeds of the greats rather than on the men themselves; Valerius organized his *opus* into illustrative rubrics. L. Alfonsi, "Carracteristiche della

A work that concentrates upon brief character likenesses and depends upon rhetoric is an ideal vehicle for the study of gender terminology; indeed, Velleius' history is a gold-mine of gender epithets. He uses *vir* over 100 times and *homo* in apposition only six; *femina* seven times, and *mulier*, never. Do these figures mean that *vir* has "taken over" the prose of the Roman Empire, as Axelson has hypothesized *femina* has?[8] Is the omission of *mulier* and rare employment of *homo* indicative of semantic disuse, or is there another explanation?

An Embarrassment of Viri

Imitation, according to Velleius, nourishes genius (1.17.6); and the nonpareil of forensic oratory and elegant prose was M. Tullius Cicero (1.17.3). Velleius' *dictum* holds true insofar as his use of gender terminlogy is concerned; for the author imitates Cicero over and over again, stocking his historical larder with great *viri* of the past. He introduces a character, such as Crassus Mucianus, and adds a laudatory epithet to his name—in Crassus' case, *vir iuris scientissimus*, an appellation that encapsulates both his career and pre-eminence (2.4.1).

A rehearsal of Velleius' *100 Great* Viri *of All Time* would be as tedious as it would be repetitious; for we have already encountered many of them in Cicero, Sallust and Livy. A partial sampling, however, in categories, shows Velleius' traditional use of *vir* as an indicator of high status or moral worth.

1. Great Kings and Lawmakers: e.g., King Codrus, *vir nonpraetereundus*, who exchanged regal robes for shepherd's skins in order to die for Athens (1.2.1); Lycurgus, *vir generis regii* and *severissimarum iustissimarumque legum auctor* (1.6.3).

2. Immortal Bards: e.g., Hesiod, *vir perelegantis ingenii et mollissimi dulcidine carminum memorabilis*: second only to Homer (*tanto viro*) (1.7.1); similarly, a single epoch of a few years' duration brought brilliance to tragedy *per divini spiritus viros*, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides (1.16.3).

letteratura Giulio-Claudia," *ANRW* 32.1, 11; cf. G. Maslakov, "Valerius Maximus and Roman historiography: a study in the *exempla* tradition," *ANRW* 32.1, 437 sq. The difference between Velleius' and Valerius' emphasis is apparent in the latter's gender terminology, for although *vir* and *femina* prevail over *homo* and *mulier*, all fall into familiar polarized concepts. The compiler of deeds is less prone to use gender terms as epithets, which Velleius does almost exclusively.

[8] B. Axelson, *Unpoetische Wörter, ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Lateinischen Dichtersprache* (Lund, 1945) 55-59.

3. Formidable Foreigners: e.g., Mithridates, *Ponticus rex, vir neque silendus neque dicendus sine cura, bello acerrimus, virtute eximius* (2.18.1); and what list would be complete without the inclusion of Minatius Magius, *dux Italicorum*, who, besides being Velleius' great-grandfather, was the grandson *Campanorum principis, celeberrimi et fidelissimi viri* (2.16.2); or the historian's grandfather, a *vir nulli secundus* (2.76.1)?

4. Notable Consulars, Past and Present: e.g., P. Scipio Aemilianus, *vir...virtutibus simillimus* to his illustrious forefathers (1.12.3); Aelius Lamia, consul of 3 A.D., *vir antiquissimi moris et priscam gravitatem semper humanitate temperans*, who failed to achieve honours only through lack of opportunity (2.116.3).

5. Lesser but Nonetheless Distinguished Notables: e.g., Statius Murcus and Crispus Marcius, *praetorii viri* (2.69.2); Augustus' father, C. Octavius, *praetor inter nobilissimos viros creatus* (2.59.2); C. Maecenas, *equestri sed splendido genere natus vir,* noted to be *otio ac mollitiis paene ultra feminam fluens* (2.88.2); and Velleius provides history's only hint about the lighter side of L. Aelius Sejanus, *vir laetissimae hilaritatis priscae severitatis* (2.174.4).

Even this abbreviated roster demonstrates that Velleius, whose work teems with the *clarissimi*, is employing *vir* in the accepted rhetorical patterns of Cicero.[9] Furthermore, it is Velleius' repeated use of *vir* as an appositive epithet that contributes to the work's encomiastic flavour and renders him vulnerable to the charge of being a panegyrist.

Velleius, however, is not entirely uncritical of his *viri*, especially when he can present a paradoxical *exemplum* that balances the good with the bad. An instance is his treatment of Gn. Pompey; while acknowledging the unquestionable greatness of the man, the historian, nevertheless, takes the general to task for an insatiable thirst for glory:

> Neque eo viro quisquam aut alia omnia minus aut gloriam magis concupiit, in adpetendis honoribus inmodicus, in gerendis verecundissimus, ut qui eos ut libentissime iniret, ita finiret aequo animo, et quod cupisset, arbitrio suo sumeret, alieno deponeret (2.33.3).

Velleius presents Cicero's hero as a petty squabbler who trades insults with Lucullus over the command of the Mithridatic war (2.33.2). Nor did Pompey stamp out the pirates alone: *multis et praeclaris viris...adsumptis*, he made the world safe from piracy (2.32.4). Despite his faults, *vir* is the only term that can possibly apply to Pompey, three times consul—a man

[9] *Clari, praeclari, and clarissimi viri:* 1.6.3; 2.2.1; 13.2; 32.1; 4; 77.3; 118.4; consuls and consular *viri*: 1.9.3; 2.1.4; 23.1; 43.4; 54.2; 69.1; 129.1

so great that Velleius could fill many volumes with his exploits, were space to permit, *cuius viri magnitudo multorum voluminum instar exigit, sed operis modus paucis eum narrari iubet* (2.29.2). According to Velleius, Pompey is the *vir* of the century (2.53.4), and he is honoured with a closing epitaph:

> Hic post tres consulatus et totidem triumphos domitumque terrarum orbem sanctissimi atque praestantissimi viri in id evecti, super quod ascendi non potest, duodesexagesimum annum agentis pridie natalem ipsius vitae fuit exitus, in tantum in illo viro a se discordante fortuna, ut cui modo ad victoriam terra defuerat, deesset ad sepulturam (2.53.3).

Velleius sums up the lives of the few *viri* who have cast indelible shadows upon history in a tradition that began with Sallust and was to reach its zenith in the works of Tacitus.[10] These obituaries, often double-edged, enable the historian to dispose of the bad and preserve the good at the same time. An example is that of Marius: *vir in bello hostibus, in otio civibus infestissimus quietisque impatientissimus* (2.23.1). Sometimes such a pronouncement will appear at the beginning of a character sketch, as with Sulla: *vir qui neque ad finem victoriae satis laudari neque post victoriam abunde vituperari potest* (2.17.1). Although Velleius deplores the proscriptions (2.28.3),[11] he is grateful that the dictator restored the courts to the Senate (2.32.3), and laments that when C. Gracchus had transferred their jurisdiction to the *equites*,[12] so many *clarissimi atque innocentissimi viri* had been condemned, including P. Rutilius, who surpasses Pompey in that he is not merely *vir* of his own century, but *omnis aevi optimus* (2.13.2).

Velleius sometimes excuses the peccadillos of his great *viri* by resorting to "*vir alioqui...*"[13] Ti. Sempronius Gracchus is the foremost example. The historian's emphasis is on the man the tribune might have become had he played the game of the *cursus honorum* according to the established rules (2.2.1-2):

> Quippe Tiberius Gracchus, Tiberii Gracchi clarissimi atque eminentissimi viri filius, P. Africani ex filia nepos, quo quaestore et auctore id foedus ictum erat, nunc graviter ferens aliquid a se pactum infirmari, nunc similis vel iudicii vel poenae metuens discrimen, tribunus plebis creatus...

The departure of the *vir alioqui vita innocentissimus, ingenio florentissimus, proposito sanctissimus* from the pale of the *boni*, however, as well as his

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[10] Woodman (*supra*, n. 2) 33-34.

[11] Hellegouarc'h notes an otherwise favourable treatment of Sulla (*supra*, n. 1) 426.

[12] *Ibid.*, 425; he cites Velleius' criticism of C. Gracchus.

[13] Crassus is a *vir cetera sanctissimus*, but for money (2.46.2): Woodman, *Velleius Paterculus, the Caesarian and Augustan Narrative (2.42-93)*, (Cambridge, 1983) 72.

agrarian reforms, only served to push the Republic to the brink: *in...anceps periculum* (2.2.2-3).

A second *vir alioqui...* is L. Opimius who, in addition to killing C. Gracchus, assassinated a *consularem ac triumphalem virum*, Fulvius Flaccus. This deed in itself was not censurable, because Gracchus had made Flaccus a *socium regalis...potentiae*. Opimius' unforgivable crime was to offer a bounty in gold on the head of a Roman citizen (2.6.4-5). The consul, to whom Gruen has attributed a "taste for violence and cruelty,"[14] furthermore, established *crudeles...quaestiones* and was responsible for the death of Flaccus' innocent son. Despite conspicuous lapses, however, Velleius grants Opimius the epithet, *vir alioqui sanctus et gravis*, but adds that no one was sorry when the consul himself was prosecuted and condemned (2.7.2-3).

L. Licinius Lucullus is Velleius' third representative. A *luxuriae primus auctor*, who frittered his fortune upon frivolous fishponds and other useless engineering projects, Lucullus is, nevertheless, *summus alioqui vir* (2.33.4).

All of the above are anomalies if one is writing a history with strong moral overtones. Gracchus had become a national symbol who had, nevertheless, acted against the interests of the Senate; Opimius, as consul, had persecuted the hero's brother and followers; and although Lucullus' extravagance was proverbial, he was, nevertheless, a consular in good standing. Velleius therefore terms them *viri alioqui...*, rather than using *homo* with pejoratives, a device that he saves for persons of demonstrably questionable motives, such as the tribunes Clodius and Curio; and for those whom he considers beyond redemption, since they have given offence to the reigning *princeps* or his family, notably M. Lollius and M. Aemilius Lepidus (*v. infra*).

Velleius is clearly dealing with what *Time Magazine* would term the "movers and shakers" of Roman history. His *viri* are mostly senators: *consulares* and *imperatores*, with an occasional equestrian or tribune who contributes his share. L. Alfonsi evaluates Velleius' work as the first great summary of history in which the entire often turbulent chronicle of the world is gravitating toward the *quies*, the *pax*, and the *tranquilitas* of the Roman-Italic based empire.[15] In Velleius' mind, the Tiberian Age acts as a magnet (2.131.1), and all great *viri*—including *ille vir*, Augustus (2.91.1), who casts *omnes omnium gentium viros* into

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[14] E.S. Gruen, *Roman Politics in the Criminal Courts* (Cambridge, 1968) 73.
[15] Alfonsi (*supra*, n. 7) 10.

caliginous obscurity (2.36.1)—all, are foreshadowing Tiberius, who, by implication, is the greatest of them all: the *princeps optimus* (2.126.4).[16]

Time after time, Velleius alludes to Tiberius, often indirectly, even before he reaches the final 38 chapters. For instance, inclusion of famous literary *viri* cannot but remind astute readers of their emperor, who, Suetonius writes, was adept at Greek and Latin literature (*Tib.* 70).[17] Another subliminal memo is the unusual spelling-out of the *praenomen* of Ti. Gracchus (2.2.1),[18] as is continual reference to characters of notable *verecundia* and *modestia*, such as Codrus and Q. Lutatius Catulus, moderation and modesty being two of the salient virtues upon which Tiberius prided himself.[19] All are devices to anticipate the entrance of the Emperor.

Another contrivance to exalt the emperor is the artful praise of his opponents-in-battle, such as Maroboduus. This historiographical ploy serves either to excuse Roman defeats; to explain why Roman victories were so hard-won; or to inflate what might have been a routine win. The characterizaton of enemy generals, such as Mithridates, as *viri*-plus-superlatives, not only renders the eventual favourable outcome for the Romans more creditable, but also serves to explain why it took them so long to accomplish the job in the first place. This is why, for instance, Pontius Telesinus, *dux Samnitum*, is noted to have been a *vir domi bellique fortissimus penitusque, Romano nomini infestissimus*, who marshalled 40,000 *fortissimae pertinacissimaeque...iuventutis* and confronted the Romans at the Colline Gate (2.27.1), a battle that brought the Republic *ad summum discrimen*. The noun *homo* that customarily signifies the average foreigner[20] does not serve because it would diminish the stature of the adversary and imply that the victory was cheaply won. Consequently, Velleius calls attention to the perilous nature of the encounter, and, at the same time, distracts the reader's attention from the fact that the Romans barely won. *Vir*-with-superlatives accentuates the military prowess of a man whom Velleius characterizes as the greatest threat since Hannibal (2.27.2-4).

Velleius applies similar rhetorical tactics to Maroboduus, chief of the Marcomanni, and thus makes Tiberius' ensuing victory over him seem

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[16] Hellegouarc'h (*supra*, n. 1) 426.

[17] Their inclusion, according to Alfonsi, transforms an otherwise historical tract into an excursus on Graeco-Roman civilization (*supra*, n. 7) 10.

[18] *v. supra*, p. 103.

[19] R.S. Rogers, *Studies in the Reign of Tiberius: Some Imperial Virtues of Tiberius and Drusus Julius Caesar* (Baltimore, 1943) 60-62.

[20] *v. supra*, chapter one, pp. 19-20.

spectacular. The historian introduces the subject of the German warrior: *Nulla festinatio huius viri mentionem transgredi debet.* Maroboduus was, he says, ...*genere nobilis, corpore praevalens, animo ferox, natione magisquam ratione barbarus* (2.108.2). By accentuating his nobility, his strength, his ferocity and his civilized nature, Velleius has created an opponent worthy of his future sovereign. Note that Maroboduus is not seeking *regnum*, but *imperium*; no barbaric migrations by disorderly hordes are these, but planned systematic invasions designed to subjugate; and Velleius employs the word *statuit* to define the chieftain's intentions (2.108.2). The author then spends an entire chapter upon Maroboduus and his 70,000 disciplined troops, and adds that military escalation by the Northern Peril had made all Italy tremble; he reminds the reader that the summits of the Alps, the nation's boundary, are less than 200 miles from Rome (2.109.4).

The would-be German Hannibal has, however, met his match in Tiberius Caesar, whom Velleius, again using *statuit*, portrays as having plans of his own: *Hunc virum [Maroboduum] et hanc regionem proximo anno diversis e partibus Ti. Caesar adgredi statuit* (2.109.5). The iterated verb, *statuit*, suggests two intellectual opponents, planning their every move, as in a game of strategic skill. Repetition of *vir* not only stresses the gigantic stature of Tiberius' adversary but it also confirms the mettle of the future emperor.

Homo: *Linguistical Relic or Fossil Aforethought?*

Infrequent use of *homo* in face of what must seem an overwhelming preference for *vir*, might indicate, at first glance, that distinctions in the early Empire have become so blurred that there is no longer any difference between the terms. This assumption would imply that Velleius' employed his gender terminology without thought. The historian's prose, however, demonstrates a mastery of the art of rhetoric;[21] it therefore seems unlikely that Velleius would employ any word carelessly. To attempt an analysis, one must test his use of *homo* to determine whether there is a pattern.

Two of the weeds in the historian's garden of *viri* are P. Clodius and G. Curio. Both portrayals, according to Woodman, are couched in similar terms. He further believes that Clodius' portrait was painted from

[21] Woodman (*supra*, n. 2) 35.

a sketch of Q. Curius, by Sallust.[22] It is more likely that Velleius' depictions derive from that of the rhetorical tribune, as did Sallust's. Well-born tribunes who sabotage the machinery of State are part of the Tiberius Gracchus syndrome. Both Clodius and Curio are described as *nobiles*, but where Clodius is a *homo nobilis, disertus, audax* (Vell. 2.45.1), Curio is a *vir nobilis, eloquens, audax* (2.48.3). Lest one think that the word *vir* sets the seal of approval upon Curio, Velleius instantly rectifies the illusion with an application of *homo*-plus-pejoratives. A *homo ingeniosissime nequam*, Curio is ever striving for the public bad: *facundus malo publico*. As Clodius is a *malorum propositorum executor acerrimus*, and *infamis* because of his relationship with his sister (2.45.1), Curio is *pudicitiae prodigus*; he furthermore squanders both his and other people's money (2.48.3-4). *Audax*, an adjective equated with *popularis*, was used traditionally for both Clodius and Curio.[23] The *homo popularis*, as we have seen in chapter one, was synonymous with the tribune of the plebs. As with Ti. Gracchus, the continual emphasis upon the nobility of these men demonstrates their betrayal of the *boni*; and the *boni*—always *viri*—are the antithesis of the *audaces*—with the exception of Curio—always *homines*.

Woodman notes that *audax*, in reference to Clodius, effectively cancels out the salubrious effects of *nobilis* and *disertus* in a Tacitean manner.[24] *Nobilis*, however, as we have seen, is not a political compliment;[25] similarly, *disertus* is a double-edged adjective that often connotes "glib" in Cicero, who uses it of orators, adolescents and old men.[26] *Homo audax* was an epithet that Cicero employed repeatedly of Clodius;[27] Velleius has neutralized *nobilis* and *disertus* not only with *audax* but also with *homo*, the former terms being enclosed by the traditional pejorative epithet.[28]

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[22] Woodman (*supra*, n. 13) 65-66.

Sed in ea coniuratione fuit Q. Curius, natus haud obscuro loco, flagitiis atque facinoribus coopertus, quem censores senatu probri gratia moverant. Huic homini non minor vanitas inerat quam audacia; neque reticere quae audierat, neque suamet ipse scelere occultare, prorsus neque dicere neque facere quicquam pensi habebat (*BC.* 23.1-2).

[23] C. Wirzubski, "*Audaces*, a study in political phraseology,"*JRS* 51 (1961) 18. cf. Seager, "Cicero and the word *popularis*," *CQ* N.S. 22 (1972) 332.

[24] Woodman (*supra*, n. 13) 65.

[25] W.K. Lacey "*Boni atque improbi*", *G&R*, ser. 2, 17 (1971) 8-9; *M. Tulli Ciceronis Pro M. Caelio Oratio*, ed. R.G. Austin, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1960) 64.

[26] H. Merguet, *Lexikon zu den Reden Ciceros mit angabe sämtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1877) s.v. *disertus*.

[27] e.g., *Sest.* 86; 100; of Clodius and his henchmen, *Dom.* 5; 54.

[28] Velleius may have picked up the epithet from Cicero, whose invective for the terrible tribune must have become canonical thanks to his published speeches and the schools of

Curio's epithets deserve comment. *Vir* contributes a positive aura to *nobilis, eloquens, audax*; *eloquens* connotes none of the glibness of *disertus*. The two adjectives, in fact, are often contrasted to the latter's detriment.[29] *Audax*, which is pejorative with *homo*, when employed with *vir* and *eloquens*, suggests that Curio is bold and innovative in his oratory. The reader is taken off guard when he is suddenly informed that the eloquent and daring young *vir nobilis* is, in fact, a *homo ingeniosissime nequam*. This is not *variatio*, but pure Ciceronian invective. *Nequam* is almost at the bottom of the vitriol barrel, being one drop removed from *nequissimus*, adjectives Cicero was wont to hurl in the faces of slaves, freedmen, gladiators in general, and G. Verres in particular.[30]

Velleius revelled in antithetical character traits in the same man.[31] *Vir nobilis*, juxtaposed with *homo...nequam*, creates an antithesis. The adverb *ingeniosissime* establishes Curio as a double-dealer through his oratory. Note how Cicero, in a similar passage, casts doubts about C. Gracchus by juxtaposing *homo* with *vir*, citing an oration *hominis...ingeniosissimi atque eloquentissimi [Gracchi]*, filled with insinuations against Piso, about whom Cicero apostrophizes: "*At in quem virum*!" Piso's *virtus* was so remarkable that Gracchus, upon being asked "Which Piso?", was forced to praise his political enemy as Piso the Worthy by uttering his *cognomen*, Frugi (*Font.* 39). It will be recalled that Cicero, in his pose as *popularis consul*, hailed the Gracchi as *clarissimi, ingeniosissimi...viri*, an epithet meant to be pleasing to the populace, but which was, in reality, fraught with double meaning (*Leg. Agr.* 2.10). *Homo ingeniosissime nequam* emphasizes the betrayal by Curio, the *vir nobilis*. Equivalent to "side-winding snake-in-the-grass", the epithet is apt for the man who not only ignited the brand that detonated the Civil War, but who, Velleius hints, actually switched sides because of bribery (2.48.3; 55.1).[32] The antithetical epithets *vir* and *homo* reveal Curio's true nature.[33]

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rhetoric which recycled threadbare *topoi* and hackneyed expressions. Maslakov (*supra*, n. 7) 445.

[29] Austin (*supra*, n. 25) 64.

[30] Merguet (*supra*, n. 26) s.v. *nequam*.

[31] Hellegouarc'h (*supra*, n. 1) 426; examples are Sulla (2.17.1) and Marius (2.23.1).

[32] E.S. Gruen writes that Curio "claimed Caesar's backing while he engaged in virulent criticism of Pompey." *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley, 1974) 481.

[33] M. Caelius is a pocket edition of Curio; Velleius terms him *vir eloquio animoque Curioni simillimus* (2.68.1). Caelius, nevertheless, surpasses Curio in both spirit and eloquence: *sed in utroque perfectior*. He is, however, just as crafty and sneaky: *nec minus ingeniose nequam*. Perhaps Velleius has omitted *homo* because he has already ranked Caelius among the great orators of all time (2.36.2).

Velleius Paterculus uses *homo* twice in non-pejorative contexts for which there are Ciceronian precedents. In the first instance, the noun is placed in apposition to the name of Cato the Younger, *homo Virtuti simillimus et per omnia ingenio diis quam hominibus propior* (2.35.2).[34] *Homo*, in the sense of human being, is contrasted to the personified *Virtus*; a similar contrast may be seen between *diis* and *hominibus*.[35] *Homo*, used by Cicero for *adulescentes* and tribunes, is suitable for Cato.[36] It emphasizes the youth of the designated Tribune of the Plebs, who, "at an age when most senators, even of the most noble stock, rarely ventured to utter a sound in the *curia*," was called on to present his *sententia* last, during the debate over the fate of the Catilinarians (2.35.3-4).[37] Hellegouarc'h sees this passage to demonstrate Velleius' ambivalence toward Cato, about whom the historian divides his judgment, as he did earlier of Scipio Nasica (2.3).[38] Cato's portrait is painted in bloodless tones, as one who is so cold-hearted that he can use his *ingenium* (as did Curio) to overturn the will of the majority. Cato's "blistering speech"[39] caused Julius Caesar and the others who argued for leniency to be suspected of complicity. *Homo*, customarily used with *adulescens*, emphasizes Cato's brash youth.[40]

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[34] . . .qui numquam recte fecit, ut facere videretur, sed quia aliter facere non potuerat, cuique id solum visum est rationem habere, quod haberet iustitiae, omnibus humanis vitiis immunis semper fortunam in sua potestate habuit (2.35.2).

[35] H.D. Jocelyn, "*Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto*," *Antichthon* 6 (1977) 33.

[36] *Adulescens homo*: Cicero: Merguet (*supra*, n 26) s.v. *adulescens*; Sallust: *BC* 38.1; 52.26; *Ep*. 1.5.5; Liv. 2.18.10; 28.40.7. An *adulescens* is a *homo* by nature of being a half-baked *vir*. Prone to imprudent impulses and mindless loquacity, he is easily led by the *nequissimi* of the world. On *adulescens* as a term of abuse, I. Opelt, *Die Lateinischen Schimpfwoerter und verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen: eine Typologie* (Heidelberg, 1965) 56; 152; 156; 187.

[37] Gruen (*supra*, n. 32) 53.

Hic tribunus pl. designatus et adhuc admodum adulescens, cum alii suaderent, ut per municipia Lentulus coniuratique custodirentur, paene inter ultimos interrogatus sententiam, tanta vi animi atque ingenii invectus est in coniurationem, eo ardore oris orationem omnium lenitatem suadentium societate consilii suspectam fecit, sic impendentia ex ruinis incendiisque urbis et commutatione status publici pericula exposuit, ita consulis virtutem amplificavit, ut universus senatus in eius sententiam transiret animadvertendumque in eos, quos praediximus, censeret maiorque pars ordinis eius Catonem prosequerentur domum.

[38] Hellegouarc'h (*supra*, n. 1) 426.

[39] Gruen (*supra*, n. 32) 55.

[40] When Cato "grows up" and refuses the *imperium* of the Pompeians, Velleius terms him a *vir*, noting that he preferred to yield the honour to P. Scipio, Pompey's father-in-law, a *vir consularis* (2.54.2-3). He coins an epigram, noting that where the *vir antiquus et gravis* (e.g., Cato) sided with the Pompeians, the *vir prudens* followed Caesar (2.49.3). Velleius implies that the conservatism of the former is outdated, while the *prudentia* of the latter foreshadows the moderation of the emperor Tiberius: Rogers (*supra*, n. 19) 60-62. It is perhaps Cato's intransigent lack of foresight that causes Velleius to pass over his famous suicide, although he records the bloody deaths *clarissimorum virorum*, including Cato's son (2.71.1). The

The other non-pejorative instance of *homo* refers to Q. Lutatius Catulus, Velleius' *exemplum* of *auctoritas* and *verecundia* (2.32.1). The historian juxtaposes the unassuming *homo*, Catulus, with the glory-seeking *vir*, Pompey.[41] The tribune, A. Gabinius, has just proposed that Pompey be given carte blanche to clear the shipping lanes of marauders.[42] He calls on the ex-consul, Catulus, hoping that he will back the proposal. Gabinius' plan backfires, however, when Catulus informs the people that Pompey is a *praeclarus vir* who has grown too great for a free Republic (2.32.1). "What," he asks, "will you do should Pompey meet with misfortune? Who will replace him?" The unanimous "You!" drives the unassuming ex-consul out of the assembly, and Velleius comments (2.32.2):

> Hic hominis verecundiam, populi iustitiam mirari libet, huius, quod non ultra contendit, plebis, quod dissuadentem et adversarium voluntatis suae vero testimonio fraudare noluit.

Pompey, it will be recalled, was portrayed as power-hungry (2.33.3). There is a specific contrast between him, the *praeclarus vir*, and Catulus, the *homo* of *verecundia*. Velleius clearly employed *vir* and *homo* to demonstrate the gulf between the overweening general and the modest ex-consul. *Homo* exudes the humility concomitant in the *auctoritas* of the wise consular or ruler. The astute reader will recognize the allusion to the man who was so modest that he had to be begged to take the reins of power, and after having done so, persistently refused excessive honours for himself and his family.[43] Tacitus and Suetonius may have twisted the facts of Tiberius' accession and its aftermath into a travesty of modesty that supposedly masked the tyrant's true intentions, but their rhetorical permutations and innuendos nevertheless reflect as much an historical aspect of the emperor's reign, as does Velleius' highly laudatory version.[44]

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historian comments on Cato's success in leading Pompey's legions despite difficulties of terrain and lack of supplies, but says nothing of his demise. His suicide may have "earned him the *cognomen* Uticensis and everlasting repute" (Gruen [*supra*, n. 32] 53), but V. seems never to have heard of it.

[41] Cicero often employed *homo* with adjectives denoting moderation of the *privatus* who did not choose to enter public life, or who had retired from office. Adjectives applied to *homo* in these cases are positive, although they may be used sarcastically of perceived scoundrels such as Antony (e.g. *Phil.* 10.13); examples: *frugi*, *modestus*, *prudens*, *pudens*, *sanctus*, *temperans* and *verecundus*. Merguet (*supra*, n. 26) s.v. adjectives noted above; Cicero himself cites Catulus as a *sapientissimus homo*, but adds *optimus cives et vir* (*Red. Sen.* 9).

[42] For an account of which, Gruen (*supra*, n. 32) 50.

[43] Suet. *Tib.* 24; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.11; 12; 14.

[44] Hellegouarc'h comments that just because Tacitus and Suetonius contradict Velleius, it does not mean that he is wrong (*supra*, n. 1) 427.

Velleius may use *homo* rarely, but his employment of the word is evocative of Ciceronian rhetoric. This is particularly apparent when he uses the term with traditional pejoratives for two persons who were his near contemporaries, M. Aemilius Lepidus, the *triumvir*, and M. Lollius.

The historian has absolutely nothing good to say about Lepidus, and he says it in no uncertain terms, anticipating Tacitean innuendo. Noting that Lepidus was *pontifex maximus in C. Caesaris locum furto creatus* (2.63.1), he compares him unfavourably to the other *triumvir* who lost his reputation along with the Civil War: *cum et Lepido omnes imperatores forent meliores et multis Antonius*.[45] Lepidus is a *vir omnium vanissimus*. The adjective used with the aristocratic term suggests vacuous arrogance, and that the *triumvir* had flaunted his high position. The historian clearly considers Lepidus perfidious. Remarking that Lepidus had the *audacia* to denounce Octavian, Velleius further relates that when that youth, unarmed and draped in a simple mantle, entered Lepidus' camp, the *homo pravissimus* unleashed a barrage of lances, one of which penetrated the lad's cloak. Octavian, however, countered audacity with audacity, and sauntered out of the encampment, brandishing a stolen eagle (2.80.1-3). Velleius closes the episode with an image of Lepidus skulking at the end of a line of admiring soldiers in order to throw himself at Octavian's feet and beg for mercy. The future Augustus magnanimously grants him his life and property, but strips him of the *dignitas* of which he was not capable (2.80.4). Velleius has emphasized Lepidus' base nature with traditional Ciceronian pejoratives in the epithet, *homo pravissimus*.

Velleius' ultimate *homo* is M. Lollius, consul of 21 B.C. and grandfather of the empress, Lollia Paullina, whose notorious emeralds Pliny the Elder saw with his own eyes (*NH* 9.117-118). [46] Lollius, *homo in omnia pecuniae quam recte faciendi cupidior et inter summam vitiorum dissimulationem vitiosissimus*, has lost the eagle of the fifth legion, forcing Tiberius Caesar to drop important affairs in the city and rush to Gaul (2.97.1). Velleius' disgust is compacted into the Ciceronian epithet, *homo...vitiosissimus*.

One might ask why Velleius designated Lollius, who had lost one

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[45] Velleius levels a Ciceronian pot-shot at Antony, adding *dum erat sobrius* (*Ib.*) He intimates that the Falernian must have been flowing freely when Antony yielded his *titulum imperii* to Lepidus, even after his own troops had deserted him. V. later provides gratuitous information that Lepidus was married to Junia, Brutus' sister, and that his son, a *iuvenis forma quam mente melior*, numbered among plotters against Octavian (2.88.1)—leaving the reader with the idea that assassination runs in families.

[46] Lollia's baubles derived from her grandfather's fleecing of Asia. R. Seager, *Tiberius* (London, 1972) 34.

eagle, a *homo*, and Quinctilius Varus, who had lost three, a *vir*. Varus, whose *clades* in the Teutoberger Wald inspired the portrait of the shaggy, unshorn Augustus in the throes of a temper tantrum, demanding the return of his eagles (Suet. *Aug*. 23), is usually viewed in a hostile light. Velleius' account, in fact, accents the governor's *segnitia*. The historian's presentation of the dead general, however, is not altogether negative. Velleius' portrait is that of an administrator and *iudex*, who mistook German barbarians for human beings (2.117.3-4):[47]

> Concepit esse homines, qui nihil praeter vocem membraque haberent hominum, quique gladiis domari non poterant, posse iure mulceri. Quo proposito mediam ingressus Germaniam velut inter viros pacis gaudentes dulcedine iurisdictionibus agendoque pro tribunali ordine trahebat aestiva.

Note that *inter viros* signifies "civilized gentlemen," calling attention to the enormity of Varus' misjudgment. There is nothing reprehensible about the hearing of lawsuits; that these actions may have been ill-timed probably stems from what R. Seager deems to have been the "overconfidence" of Augustus, who believed that the area was pacified.[48] Velleius states specifically that the Germans, in his opinion, *mendaces*, had concocted an excessive number of spurious lawsuits in order to divert Varus' attention so that the governor was lulled *in summam socordiam* (2.118.1). *Socordia* and *segnitia* can signify inactivity as well as laziness, and it is Varus' *segnitia* of which the treacherous Arminius takes advantage (2.118.2). Varus, whom Seager terms an "administrator",[49] displayed no torpidity in the exercise of his judicial duties; as Velleius remarks, he was so busy acting as *praetor urbanus* in the forum that he did not have time to give attention to the army (2.118.1).

Velleius' account is by no means as "bitter" as Seager suggests.[50] When the governor is warned of the brewing conspiracy through Segestes—*per...virum eius gentis fidelem clarique nominis* (2.118.4)—Velleius censures not Varus' disbelief, but rather *fatum*, which distorts his judgment: he preferred to stand by his provincials until their *benevolentia* was proven otherwise (*Ib*.). After the disaster, Tiberius had Varus' head given honourable burial in the family tomb (2.119.5). That the *gentilicius tumulus* was that of the Julio-Claudians, and not that of the Quinctilii, is indicated by the fact that Varus was married to Augustus' grand-niece,

[47] *Ibid., loc. cit.*; Seager writes of Velleius' "bitter attack" (*supra*, n. 46) 269. cf. Woodman who notes that Varus' vice of sloth "runs like a refrain" throughout the episode (*supra*, n. 2) 42.

[48] Seager (*supra*, n. 46) 44.

[49] *Ibid., loc. cit.*

[50] Seager (*supra*, n. 46) 269.

Claudia Pulchra.[51] It is likely that considerations of the sensibilities of the imperial family rest behind Velleius' use of *vir*, and his comparatively sympathetic report of the *clades* which fixes the blame on German treachery and the vicissitudes of fate that clouded an otherwise clear judgment. Suetonius seems also to have picked up a sympathetic source in his observation that between the Varian and the Lollian *clades*, the latter was by far the more disgraceful:

> Graves ignominias cladesque duas omnino nec alibi quam in Germania accepit, Lollianam et Varianam, sed Lollianam maioris infamiae quam detrimenti, Varianam paene exitiabilem tribus legionibus cum duce legatisque et auxiliis omnibus caesis (*Aug*. 23).

Seager observes that Velleius' account of the disaster is "inconsistent with his earlier claim that Tiberius had virtually pacified Germany."[52] The reasons for the inconsistency hark back to G. Flaminius and the numerous *Flaminiana ostenta* that Cicero notes were concocted in order to explain the loss of the battle of Trasimennus (*Div*. 2.67). Quinctilius Varus had one essential element in common with G. Flaminius: he was killed in battle and could therefore be served on a platter to the Roman people as the ideal scapegoat. One does not attribute the loss of consular armies to bad judgment on the part of the Senate or the Emperor and his son, the field marshal. However, firm establishment of the blame on the dead commander who is in no position to contradict, preserves appearances and reinforces confidence in governmental policy. Where G. Flaminius' impiety served the exigencies of 217 B.C., which were to convince the people that the gods were enraged (Liv. 21.52-22.1), Varus' *segnitia* later removed the onus from Augustan policy and Tiberian commandership. Velleius' sympathy for the fallen general is evident in Varus' epitaph where he is termed a *vir* of the best intentions:

> Ex quo apparet Varum, sane gravem et bonae voluntatis virum, magis imperatoris defectum consilio quam virtute destitutum militum se magnificentissimumque perdidisse exercitum (2.120.5).

Varus may have lost three consular armies, but he had been married to the emperor's grand-niece, a second cousin once-removed of Velleius' ruler, Tiberius, who, moreover, had given what was left of the slain commander honourable burial in the family tomb. *Vir* is the only word that is suitable. The term *homo* with its traditional pejorative adjectives, so often employed to stigmatize persons as seditious or as public

[51] Seager (*supra*, n. 46) 44.
[52] *Ibid*., 269.

enemies, is out of the question when dealing with imperial connections (in a family riddled with sufficient scandal). Its use would be tantamount to *maiestas*.[53]

Velleius may also have had Tiberius' sensibilities in mind when he termed Lollius a *homo...vitiosissimus*; for the rapacious consular, the mentor of Augustus' grandson, Gaius, in 1 B.C.,[54] had begun a whispering campaign about Tiberius which almost succeeded in alienating him completely from his step-father (Suet. *Tib.* 12.3).[55] While Velleius passes over this embarassing lapse in Tiberius' past, he nevertheless wreaks *vendetta* on his emperor's behalf, by employing traditional Ciceronian invective, designating Lollius, *homo...vitiosissimus*.

Velleius' Women: Flyspecks on the Panorama

The history of the world, according to Velleius, begins with the fall of Troy and the founding of new cities by heroes of both sides in the subsequent diaspora (1.1.1). From almost the very beginning of Velleius' history, it becomes apparent that women are to occupy a tangential position in his roster of luminaries, and a minimal one at that. In a chronicle that centers upon character sketches of famous and distinguished men, there are only 21 (human) females mentioned by name; most references resemble entries in a telephone directory, or, more to the point, a marriage registry. Consequently, with notable exceptions, Velleius Paterculus' feminine portrayals make Livy's paper-doll characters seem three dimensional by comparison.

Most Velleian females are fixed as an appendage to some great *vir*; women do not merit comment, and yet their presence is felt in their designations as *alicuius uxores*, *alicuius filiae*, or *alicui nuptae*, demonstrating their indispensability as pawns in the marriage game.[56] For example, it is of the utmost importance that Lucilia, Pompey's mother, is *stirpis senatoriae* (2.29.2), but this is all that Velleius reveals about her. Likewise, Atia, C. Octavius' wife, is of consequence only as the daughter of Julia, demonstrating thereby Augustus' relationship to

[53] Velleius had the same problem with Julia, the daughter of Augustus; on how he solved it, *v. infra*, 117-18.

[54] Seager (*supra*, n. 46) 34.

[55] *Ibid.* 35.

[56] J.P. Hallett terms such women (usually in their early teens) "hot political properties," "The role of women in Roman elegy: counter-cultural feminism," *Arethusa* 6 (1973) 107. She notes that daughters were considered extensions of their fathers' identities: *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society* (Princeton, 1984) 338.

Julius Caesar (2.59.2). Caesar's daughter Julia, *uxor Magni*, is simply perceived as glue in the alliance of the dynasts that swiftly disintegrates upon her death (2.44.3; 47.2).[57] Even her value as *fecundatrix* is negated with the demise of her baby, whose importance to its father is indicated in the designation *parvus Pompei*.

The brief entrances of Cinna's daughter, Cornelia, and of her mother Annia, first married to Cinna and then to Piso, illustrate the extent to which Roman women were passed from *gens* to *gens* in the manner of broodmares being sent from one studfarm to the next.[58] The reader is intended to feel admiration for Caesar (in his role as *sanguine coniunctissimus* of Marius) who refused to yield to pressure to divorce Cornelia when Sulla came into power (Cornelia, apparently, being "above suspicion"); and disgust for Piso, a *consularis*, who untied the connubial knot in order to elicit favour from the dictator (2.41.2). What the women in question might have felt is not an issue.

Junia's only existence is dependent upon M. Aemilius Lepidus (son of the *triumvir*) and her deceased brother, Brutus. She seems to have been dragged into the narrative for the sole purpose of insinuating that any man who is married to the sister of a conspirator will, consequently, hatch a plot against Augustus (2.88.1). The emperor's sister Octavia's presence in the history has the insubstantial quality of a wraith that materializes first to Antony, whose wife she is (2.78.1), and then vanishes when her son Marcellus dies (2.93.1). She is either identified as *soror Caesaris* or *soror Augusti*, but has no personality of her own.[59] Even the sanctified Cornelia arouses Velleius' interest only insofar as she is the daughter of Africanus and the mother of the Gracchi (2.7.1).

Perhaps Velleius thought that Vergil had said all that there was to say about Dido, since the only information that the historian contributes is that her real name was Elyssa and that she came from Tyre (1.6.4). Historic Helen's face may have launched a thousand ships for Christopher Marlowe, but it stirred nary a breeze in Velleius' sails, as he recalls her merely as the wife of Menelaus and the mother of Hermione, on whose behalf Orestes took revenge on Achilles' son, because the matricide wanted her for himself (1.1.3); and Caesar's Calpurnia is memorialized only as a woman who was disturbed by nightmares (2.57.2).

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[57] If "a genuine warmth developed between husband and wife," (*Gruen* [*supra*, n. 32] 450) it does not concern Velleius.

[58] 2.53.2; 2.41.2; *v. supra*, n. 56.

[59] Hallett, in *FDRS*, notes that Octavia was identified as *soror Augusti* on her tombstone (*supra*, n. 56) 48, n. 19.

In order to catch Velleius Paterculus' attention, a woman had to swallow live coals, as did Servilia, the wife of Lepidus (2.88.3); and Velleius' sanctimonious pronunciamento, that Servilia compensated for her premature death by the consequent immortality accrued to her name, cannot quite hide the relish with which he savours the tale. Velleius compares Servilia's ghastly suicide with that of the wife of Antistius, *Calpurnia Bestiae filia*, who after her husband was murdered, seized his sword and thrust it into her breast (2.26.3). The historian's subsequent remark echoes a vicarious sado-masochistic enthusiasm for feminine suicide that pervades Roman history: *Quantum huius gloriae famaeque accessit nunc virtute feminae!*[60] In the historiographical tradition of Livy, here is another moral message for *feminae* of the aristocracy to act accordingly in a similar situation.

Most women, however, are not nearly so accommodating. From the beginning, the reader is made aware that members of the female sex are going to contribute to the general uproar and destroy the world's *tranquillitas*, by Velleius' announcement of the crime of Clytemnestra (1.1.2), who is closely followed by her daughter Electra, *virilis animi femina* and *socia consiliorum* of the matricidal Orestes (1.1.3). Her rhetorical prototype has been encountered before in Sallust's Sempronia, noted, however, to have been a *mulier*, who committed her crimes with *virile audacia* (*BC* 25.1); or in Damarata who breathed *muliebria consilia* into the ear of Adranadorus (Liv. 24.22.11). Note, however, that Sallust and Livy expressed their disapproval with *mulier* and *muliebris*. Velleius, on the other hand, has used *femina*. For one thing, Electra was the daughter of wide-ruling Agamemnon, and therefore *femina* is the appropriate term for one of her class. Moreover, Velleius actually shows a tacit approval of her actions, as he notes that Orestes' deed must have been proper, because the gods allowed him a prosperous reign of seventy years (1.1.3). *Femina* is likewise appropriate to a tragic heroine, since masculine audacity was a feminine characteristic in Greek tragedy, being expressed in the term *androphron gyne*.[61] The exalted term *femina* is appropriate to the lofty themes of tragedy; and *virilis animi femina* suits Mycenean Electra admirably.

As Livy did, Velleius uses *muliebris* to connote undesirable characteristics. Fulvia, Antony's spouse, also displays virile boldness as she foments a tumult in the army and seizes the hilltown of Praeneste. The

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[60] Woodman regards Servilia's swallowing of live coals as being "beyond belief", but nevertheless notes the addiction of Roman authors to female suicides (*supra*, n. 13) 246; 235.

[61] R.M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy, Books 1-5* (Oxford, 1965) 188.

historian, however, expresses Fulvia's transference of gender roles in a negative manner, noting that she had *nihil muliebre* about her except her body (2.74.2), an expression totally devoid of the tragic overtones that are conveyed in *virilis animi femina*. Fulvia has been identified as the daughter of the aforementioned Sempronia;[62] Velleius seems to believe in the adage "like mother, like daughter." Fulvia is the prototype of the *dux femina* who will be met again in Tacitus.[63]

Cleopatra is introduced in a vivid passage that seems to blame her for Antony's betrayal of his country as well as his passion for bacchanalianism (2.82.4):[64]

> Crescente deinde et amoris in Cleopatram incendio et vitiorum, quae semper facultatibus licentiaque et adsentationibus aluntur, magnitudine, bellum patriae inferre constituit, cum ante novum se Liberum Patrem appellari iussisset, cum redimitus hederis crocataque velatus aurea et thyrsum tenens cothurnisque succinctus curru velut Liber Pater vectus esset Alexandriae.

Velleius grants Cleopatra grudging admiration, however, when he writes that, after the sting of the asp, she yielded up her spirit *expers muliebris metus* (2.87.1). Womanly fears, as Livy has illustrated, are to be avoided at all costs. Velleius' remarks about Fulvia and Cleopatra demonstrate that *muliebris* has lost none of its pejorative thrust.

Julia, the daughter of Augustus, also receives attention. Her portrait, however, is devoid of any of the rhetorical stereotypes in which Velleius might have indulged, given the circumstances. As with Varus, Velleius is treading a tightrope. Since Augustus relegated Julia to Trimerus (Tac. *Ann.* 4.71), the historian must account for her moral failings but at the same time be mindful that she was the wife of his emperor and the daughter of his ruler's predecessor (2.100.3-5). He solves the problem with gender terms. He designates Julia a *femina* (2.93.2; 100.3) and even seems to place the onus of guilt on her lovers: Iulus Antonius is a *violator eius domus [Caesaris]*; Quintius Crispinus' austere countenance masked his *singularem nequitiam*; and Appius Claudius, Sempronius Gracchus,

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[62] S.B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves* (N.Y., 1975) 185.

[63] *v. infra*, chapter seven, pp. 131-34.

[64] Except for Cleopatra's death, Velleius is not favourable to her. He leaves the impression that Antony's vices were contingent upon his passion for the queen. Their triumphal procession seems to be an evocation of Alexander's Indian triumph of Dionysus; (2.82.4); Alexander was drunk at the time too: Arr. *Anab.* 6.28; cf. Q.C., 9.10.24, sqq.; Plut. *Alex.* 67; Diod. 17.106.1; on the Indian triumph of Dionysus, F. Matz, "Die dionysischen Sarkophage," *ASR* 4:2, pl. 116; F.E. Santoro L'hoir, "Three sandalled footlamps, their apotropaic potentiality in the cult of Sarapis," *AA* 98.2 (1983) 234. Velleius cannot decide whether Cleopatra is cowardly, or, whether, like Antony's other wife, she has a *virilis anima*. He notes that the queen was the first to flee after Actium (2.85.3), but observes that Antony's troops considered her to be the one who gave the orders (2.85.6).

Scipio, and *aliique minoris nominis utriusque ordinis viri* paid the penalty for their adultery as if Julia had been an ordinary wife and not the daughter of Caesar (2.100.3). Velleius betrays a note of sympathy and rises above stereotypical commonplaces with a rare and genuine glimpse of the grief of two women: Julia who is banished to her island, and her mother, Augustus' discarded wife, Scribonia, who accompanies her and remains to share her exile (2.100.5). Repetition of the aristocratic word *femina* has allowed Velleius to convey the respect due to an imperial connection, and, at the same time, relate the reasons for her disgrace.

Not surprisingly, Tiberius' mother Livia takes a stellar role in Velleius' history; and it is a very different Livia from the conniving crone in Tacitus' *Annales*. Velleiüs describes her in terms reminiscent of the heroine of a gothic novel: young and beautiful, Livia undergoes no end of danger and tribulations before being swept off her feet by the handsome brooding hero. Velleius, commenting on the vagaries of fortune, emphasizes Livia's noble birth (2.75.2-3):

> Quis fortunae mutationes, quis dubios rerum humanarum casus satis mirari queat? Quis non diversa praesentibus contrariaque expectatis aut speret aut timeat? Livia, nobilissimi et fortissimi viri Drusi Claudiani filia, genere, probitate, forma Romanarum eminentissima, quam postea coniugem Augusti vidimus, quam transgressi ad deos sacerdotem ac filiam, tum fugiens mox futuri sui Caesaris arma ac manus bimum hunc Tiberium Caesarem, vindicem Romani imperii futurumque eiusdem Caesaris filium, gestans sinu, per avia itinerum vitatis militum gladiis uno comitante, quo facilius occultaretur fuga, pervenit ad mare et viro Nerone pervecta in Siciliam est.

The fact that the heroine of the tale was encumbered by husband and child and conspicuously pregnant, matters not a whit when one is dealing with *divi* and the objects of their affections. Livia is reminiscent of a gravid Helen as she is abducted by her august Paris, a *vir humana ope invictus* (2.79.2-3). Furthermore, she has the approval both of Republic and her ex-husband who, rather than over-reacting as did Menelaus, gives the bride away. The precipitate appearance of little Drusus Claudius *intra Caesaris penates* seems to have bothered no one (2.95.1).[65]

A mother who is a heroine will naturally give birth to heroes, as Velleius makes patently clear in his final 38 chapters. As far as women are concerned, the historian saves the best for the last, and his apostrophe for the deceased Livia exhibits *femina* in its quintessence. Tiberius,

[65] The story, apparently, is so entertaining that Velleius tells it twice (once in an abbreviated form: 2.94.1).

afflicted with the calamities visited on him by his ungrateful daughter-in-law and grandson, has also been bereaved of his beloved mother (2.130.5):

> Cuius temporis aegritudinem auxit amissa mater, eminentissima et per omnia deis quam hominibus similior femina, cuius potentiam nemo sensit nisi aut levatione periculi aut accessione dignitatis.

This epitaph is very different from the acerbic double-edged obituaries of Velleius' great *viri* of the past. It is compassionate and demonstrates what may very well be the genuine gratitude of a man who owed his elevation to the emperor and perhaps to his august mother as well.[66] At any event, what other word but *femina* could Velleius use for one whom he has exalted to a level almost equal to the gods?

Velleius' almost exclusive use of *vir* and *femina* is by design, not by chance. Like Vergil, he is dealing with heroes of epic proportions, as his opening scenes of the aftermath of Troy indicate. He presents his readers with a pageant of heroic *viri*, all marching through time towards the emperor who surpasses all *viri*. There are no rude slaves or uncouth *liberti* to represent the *homo humillimus*; even the foreigners are larger-than-life and therefore merit the label *vir*. Likewise, there are no *mulieres*, because the few women who claim the historian's attention are not only aristocats, but some of them are also extraordinary; their deeds raise them far above the humdrum *mulier*.

Velleius' gender terminology is consistent with that of Cicero, Sallust and Livy. *Vir* is employed persistently as an appositive because Velleius is tenaciously preoccupied with the prominent persons who "made history", and *vir*-plus-superlatives encapsulates the significant attributes of the greats whose lives-in-brief he is highlighting. In short, *vir* and, to a lesser extent, *femina*, predominate his vocabulary, not because the words had become "popularized" in the prose of the Roman Empire, but because they were the aristocratic terms which best served Velleius' purposes.

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[66] Alfonsi (*supra*, n. 7) 10.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TACITUS: THE TRADITION AND ITS BREAKING

Because of the multiplicity of his works and his skill in the art of prose, Tacitus' use of gender terms ranges from the conventional to the subtle. At times he is traditional: in *Agricola*, *Germania* and the *Histories*, works said to reflect elements of Cicero and Livy,[1] Roman *viri*, of whom Agricola is the foremost, are *fortissimi*, *militares*, or *inlustres*;[2] and their *feminae* are *nobilissimae*, *primores* and *conspicuae*.[3]

Tacitus often applies gender epithets to minor characters in order to clarify their position in the hectic events of the narrative.[4] In the *Annales*, he uses *vir* and *femina* with adjectives of rank in order to emphasize Julio-Claudian oppression of the aristocacy; in such cases the nouns preserve their traditional overtones of moral excellence. The repetition of words has a cumulative impact upon the reader.[5] Thus the iteration of *feminae inlustres* in contexts of victimization stresses the brutal tyranny of the Julio-Claudians against women of the senatorial class. *Mulieres* in general are not being oppressed, but rather Rome's finest *feminae* with all their inherent virtues. For instance, Junia Silana, *nobilis femina*, is hounded out of her home by Messalina (*Ann.* 11.12.7); Calpurnia, *inlustris femina*, falls victim to Agrippina's jealousy (*Ann.* 12.22.12;

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[1] R.M. Ogilvie notes Tacitus' debt in his early works to Cicero, Sallust, and Livy: *Corneli Taciti de Vita Agricolae* (Oxford, 1967) 22; 26; cf. R. Martin, who cites Ciceronianisms in the *Histories*: *Tacitus* (London, 1981) 231.

[2] Agricola does not lament *muliebriter* for the deaths of *fortes viri*, including his son (*Ag.* 29.1); the *gloria viri [Agricolae]* is hailed (*Ag.* 41.1); and he is a *bonus vir* and *magnus* (44.2). *Militares viri*: *Ag.* 41.2; Martin equates this with persons distinguished in military action (*supra*, n. 1) 32. In the *Histories*: *clari viri*, who have died well, 1.3.5; the duty *acrioris viri* to do so, 1.21.16; Cluvius Rufus, a *vir facundus*, 1.8.3; Sempronius Densus, centurion, *insignis illa die vir*, 1.43.1; *fortissimi viri*: 2.28.7; 3.31.13; 4.24.12; 64.19; *arma virique* (and/or *equi*): 1.51.8; 67.3; 2.22.2; 70.5; 3.55.4; 4.12.10; 58.15; 64.9; *militares viri*: 2.75.2; 3.73.10.

[3] *Feminae nobilissimae*: *Ag.* 45.1; *primores*: *Hist.* 1.81.1; *conspicuae*: 4.42.23; there are, predictably, fewer feminine paragons.

[4] In the first three works, Agricola is the only major character to be assigned gender terms; all are in keeping with the Ciceronian tradition. Martin notes a twelve month time span for the first three books of the *Histories* (*supra*, n. 1) 101. Note how the epithet, *celebris ingenii vir*, contributes to the status of Votienus Montanus, whom Tacitus is presenting as a victim of Tiberius (*Ann.* 4.42). Seneca the Elder, however, is not so unstinting in his estimation of Montanus' intellect, as can be seen from his epithet, *homo rarissimi, etiamsi non emendatissimi ingenii (Contr.* 9.5.15).

[5] H.W. Benario notes the care with which Tacitus selected his words, particularly in the *Annales*: *An Introduction to Tacitus* (Athens, Ga., 1975) 91.

14.12.15); and A. Plautius' wife, Pomponia Graecina, *insignis femina*, is indicted as *superstitionis externae rea* (*Ann.* 13.32.6). All are to be pitied the more because they are *feminae* of the aristocracy. Conversely, there exists a sense of outrage when it is discovered that *inlustres feminae* have disgraced themselves in the arena (*Ann.* 15.32.6) or have allowed Nero to degrade them in his private *lupanaria* during one of his obscene spectacles (*Ann.* 15.37.11).

With the exceptions of the victims of Julio-Claudian rapacity, however, one notes a decline of the tendency to impose moral overtones onto gender terminology in the *Annales*, where Tacitus is said to have rejected neo-Ciceronian oratory.[6] Little concerned with the lower classes individually,[7] Tacitus probes the personalities of the *viri* and especially the *feminae* who revolved around the emperors. His gender terms are based upon high rank. A *femina*, for instance, may be thoroughly depraved, but she remains, most often, a *femina*. Like Livy, Tacitus will censure her behaviour as *muliebris*.[8] In special cases, however, when a female character has excelled in odium, Tacitus will apply traditional Ciceronian terms of abuse, which because of their rare use in his works, become particularly effective instruments of innuendo.[9]

Tacitus' use of gender terminology is complicated even further by his development of the "noble savage" theme—also evident in Livy—where barbarians of pristine virtue serve as "teachers" to Roman *viri* and *feminae*, and the terms, applied to primitives, exude moral connotations that pertain to the Roman aristocracy.[10] Whereas the barbarian *vir* is invariably valorous, his feminine counterpart—termed *femina*—upon occasion, acts in an unacceptable manner, such as actively participating on the battlefield. The *femina* as *dux*, in fact, is a Tacitean preoccupation

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[6] Martin (*supra*, n.1) 214; G. Kennedy *The Art of Rhetoric in the Ancient World* (Princeton, 1972) 523.

[7] Of the few specified with gender terms: Acte (for whom Tacitus uses the diminutive *muliercula* as *meretrix* or *concubina*). Acte has been provided to keep Nero from venting his lust *in stupra feminarum inlustrium* (*Ann.* 13.12); cf. Cicero, *Verr.* 2.192; 3.31; 78; 79; 5.63; 100; 131; cf. Livy, 27.15.9; Epicharis, *infra*, 135-37. Whether or not *mulier*, used of Locusta, a professional poisoner (*Ann.* 12.66), indicates servile status, it can only be pejorative. On Acte, C.W. Mendell, *Tacitus, the Man and his Work* (London, 1957) 153; cf. B. Baldwin, "Women in Tacitus," *Prudentia* 4 (1972) 85. He notes that Locusta is foreshadowed by Martina (*Ibid.*, 89), a poisoner who is not specified by gender.

[8] L.W. Rutland, "Women as makers of kings in Tacitus' *Annals*," *CW* 72 (1978) 15-17; *v. supra*, chapter five, pp. 80-83.

[9] One searches in vain for *homines nequissimi*, but T. uses *mulier* in pejorative contexts for characters such as the younger Agrippina and Poppaea whom he judges to be paragons of *impudicitia* (Conversely, he uses *femina* to illustrate the courage of the *liberta* Epicharis (*v. infra*, pp. 135-37).

[10] K.V. Muellendorf, *Die Germania des Tacitus* (Berlin, 1900) 308.

that finds space in all of his works (*v. infra*, 131-34). The *feminae* in question are of high rank, and the historian clearly takes a dim view of women's participation in public affairs, a sentiment which he develops fully in the *Annales*. In such contexts, the term *femina* implies a message to women of the aristocracy who might have similar inclinations.

Tacitus' characters are far better developed than those of his predecessors;[11] consequently, he has less need to employ capsule gender epithets for his protagonists. Such "instant" devices of identification, particularly when used in apposition, had become hackneyed through overuse.[12] Rather, Tacitus weaves such terms skillfully into the narrative, sometimes employing them, as did Sallust, to reflect the thoughts of his characters. Because of their traditional moral nuances, the words lend subtle colouring to his description.[13]

Tacitus' Feminine Ideal vs. the Feminine Reality

Much of the Roman Empire's malaise in the days of the Julio-Claudians, according to Tacitus, can be blamed upon the women of that family, who persistently meddled in affairs of State, scheming and plotting, in particular, in matters of the imperial succession.[14] *Probitas* is a salient feminine ideal, and the Julio-Claudian *feminae* seem to have had not the slightest concept of the traditional aristocratic propriety demanded of a member of the nobility. Tacitus implies as much of Livia in a tribute that is invalidated by censure: *sanctitate domus priscum ad morem, comis ultra quam antiquis feminis probatum; mater impotens, uxor facilis et cum artibus mariti, simulatione filii bene composita* (*Ann.* 5.1). Livia, the wicked *noverca*, hovers over the narrative like a sinister miasma, in order to foreshadow the entrance of another "monstrous dowager", the younger Agrippina; both women are characterized as symbols of *muliebris impotentia*.[15] Rutland has noted Tacitus' entirely negative concept of

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[11] S.G. Daitz, "Tacitus' technique of character portrayal," *AJPh* 81 (1961) 30. cf. Mendell (*supra*, n. 7) 139-40.

[12] While the epithets *v. clarissimus* and *h. nequissimus* may have had a powerful impact when spoken by Cicero, in written retrospect, the expressions become trite and show the orator's transparent motives. Such terms seem particularly sterile in the prose of Velleius Paterculus (*v. supra*, chapter six).

[13] Because of the complexity of the subject, the usual rubrics based upon class, citizenship, etc., will not be used. Since T. clearly envisioned the ills of the pre-Flavian era to have been caused by the women who dominated the imperial rulers, the subject will be approached from that point of view.

[14] Rutland (*supra*, n. 8) 15.

[15] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 194; Rutland (*supra*, n. 8) 16.

muliebris, an adjective that she sees to connote "unreason," [violent] "emotion, and deception."[16] She has, however, not remarked upon Tacitus' almost exclusive reservation of *muliebris* for women of the imperial family (or those closely connected to them, such as Plancina). For instance, Livilla fires the usually *socors* Sejanus *muliebri cupidine* (*Ann.* 4.39) as she prods him (*flagitante*) to marry her. Tacitus—via the mind of Tiberius—notes that an *aemulatio feminarum* is likely to explode over the prospective nuptials due to the probable reaction of the elder Agrippina (*Ann.* 4.40). The rivalry in question is clearly about to rage among *feminae* of the highest order. A similar *aemulatio muliebris* has seethed around Livia, Plancina, and Agrippina the Elder (2.43),[18] whom Tacitus has characterized as a *femina ingens animi* (1.69).

Tacitus has cast the ill-fated Messalina in the role of libidinous conniver, who brings about the ruin of the consular Valerius Asiaticus because she covets his pleasure gardens.[17] He, however, opens his veins rather than submit to Messalina, who has caused his downfall *fraude muliebri* (*Ann.* 11.3). It becomes increasingly apparent that antique probity is in short supply among the Julio-Claudian *feminae*, who are supposed to serve as *exempla* for women of the aristocracy as well as for the female population at large.

Since Tacitus portrays each of the family's *principes* as being under the thumb of one or more of these women, there is not much hope for leadership in the masculine quarter either. *Muliebris impotentia* reigns! And Tacitus states [19] in "fiercely emotive" language that the *princeps*—indeed the entire nation—has become a slave to a *femina* (*Ann.* 1.4.17-19).[20]

This unprecedented situation is so depressing that Tacitus cannot even turn to great *viri* of the past for hope, in the Livian manner; indeed, he laments that everything to be said on that subject has already been written by *claris scriptoribus* (*Ann.* 1.1). A measure of the historian's pessimism is that even in the *Germania*, Tacitus looks not to Rome for moral inspiration, but to the simple societies of her barbarian neigh-

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[16] *Ibid.* 15-16. Seneca uses *muliebris* similarly. e.g, *muliebris inpotentia*, *Ben.* 7.9.4, *Hel.* 14.2.4; *m. pertinacia*, *Ib.* 16.1.5; *m. exscusatio*, *Ib.* 16.1.4; *m. dolor*, *Ib.* 3.2.3; *m. vitia*, *Ib.* 16.2.3; *m. mollitia*, *Trn.* 17.4.7; *m. ira*, *Ira*, 1.20.3.

[17] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 96; Tac. *Ann.* 11.1.2; R. Syme, "Princesses and others in Tacitus," *G&R*, ser. 2, 28.1 (1981) 48.

[18] Rutland (*supra*, n. 8) 16.

[19] And restates: *Ann.* 12.7.

[20] F.R.D. Goodyear, *Annals of Tacitus* (Cambridge, 1972) 124.

bours, where *viri* and *feminae* have not been spoiled by the gratification of prosperity and opulence.[21]

Barbarian warriors, like their Roman adversaries, are *viri*, a term in keeping with their bellicose nature and standing as worthy, formidable opponents. They are not thwarted by their *feminae*, as Roman *viri* are, but are fiercely supported to the very last drop of blood. Like *vir*, the term *femina*, when applied to German women, oozes traditional Roman moral overtones; and since barbarian *viri* and *feminae* are exponents of what passes for an aristocracy among primitive peoples, they serve as *exempla*—most often of pristine virtues, but sometimes of vices—that are to be emulated or shunned by Roman *viri* and *feminae*.[22]

The barbarian institution of marriage is particularly admired by Tacitus. The German *femina*, unlike the Roman, knows her proper place and is frugal and chaste; her portrait, therefore, serves as a mirror for the *femina* of the Roman aristocracy.[23] There is no need to pass a *Lex Oppia* to curtail her spending on wild-coloured clothing: Tacitus informs his readers that the German *femina* wears exactly the same clothes as the German *vir* (*Ger.* 17). He furthermore states that the husband brings his dowry to the wife, and moreover, it is not squandered upon *deliciae muliebres*, but spent wisely upon the worthwhile things of life, such as oxen, harness and weapons. This latter fact, according to the historian-ethnographer, is the real *vinculum* of their union, which he manages to make seem like the mating of a pair of draught horses. It is in this passage that Tacitus employs the word *mulier*, the one and only time in *Germania*. It is used as a synonym for *uxor* and juxtaposed to *vir*, an equivalent word to *maritus*, employed at the beginning of the chapter (*Ger.* 18). *Mulier*, the general term for woman, assumed a secondary significance of wife, and J.N. Adams cites a colloquial usage in which a man refers to "his woman".[24] The *vir*/husband—*mulier*/wife relationship is an unequal one symbolized by the virile and chauvinistic overtones of the first term and the humble and therefore docile ones of the second. A sense of ownership is implied, as if the *mulier* is the property of the *vir*; this is conveyed in

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[21] J.C.G. Anderson, *De Origine et Situ Germanorum* (Oxford, 1938) xvi; c.f. Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 51.

[22] G.E.F. Chilver, *A Historical Commentary on Tacitus' Histories, vols. I & II* (Oxford, 1979) 22; cf. Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 49.

[23] Muellendorf (*supra*, n. 10) 307-8.

[24] J.N. Adams, "Latin words for "woman" and "wife"," *Glotta* 50 (1972) 249.

Tacitus' words which contain a cautionary message for wives "back home" (*Ger.* 18.4).[25]

Otherwise, when Tacitus is not expounding upon the ideal of feminine marital servitude, the barbarian woman is a *femina*, and one who knows her place in the *domus*. In consequence, the historian assures his readers, even the most *fortissimus* and *bellicosissimus* warrior, home from a hard-day's slaughter, is delighted to relinquish pre-eminence in the household to her. All the chores, in fact, are left in the capable hands of the *feminae*, the aged, and the infirm (15.1). *Feminae*, juxtaposed with *senes* and *infirmissimi*, preserves all its familiar connotations of coddled propriety, as valued by the Roman [male] aristocracy. The message is sounded in clarion tones and will most certainly not be lost upon Roman *viri* who will be equally delighted to yield any such household decisions to their *feminae*, if only they will stay put! Tacitus oberves that the *domus* and *penates* are the proper sphere of the German *femina*, and K. Muellendorf remarks that the passage refers to men and women of the warrior aristocracy, since Tacitus employs *sedes et penates* to indicate slaves.[26]

With the *femina* tending to her proper duties, the warrior-*vir*-at-home becomes the lion tamed, and Tacitus lapses into the terminology of the *privatus*, describing him in his abdicated status, as *homo*:[27]

> Ipsi hebent, mira diversitate naturae, cum idem homines sic ament inertiam et oderint quietem (*Ger.* 15.1).

German burial customs also elicit Tacitean praise, as he observes that barbarian funerals are plain and lack vulgar displays of ostentation. Furthermore, *clari viri* are cremated simply (*Ger.* 27). The brief period of mourning among the Germans would have evoked Livian approval, and Tacitus editorializes on the subject in an epigram: *feminis lugere honestum est, viris meminisse*—another allusion to proper Roman comportment, or at least the way it ought to be (*Ib.*).[28] Feminine mourning, as long as it is kept within limits, is to be encouraged as it reinforces the

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[25] Ne se mulier extra virtutum cogitationes extraque bellorum casus putet, ipsis incipientis matrimonii auspiciis admonetur venire se laborum periculorumque sociam, idem in pace, idem in proelio passuram ausuramque: hoc iuncti boves, hoc paratus equus, hoc data arma denuntiant. Sic vivendum, sic pareundum; accipere se quae liberis inviolata ac digna reddat, quae nurus accipiant rursusque ad nepotes referantur.

[26] Muellendorf (*supra*, n. 10) 275.

[27] Baldwin notes Tacitus' reticence upon the details of his own marriage (*supra*, n. 7) 97. Tacitus' view of women in the *Annales* prompts one to wonder, not so much about his wife, but about his mother!

[28] Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 219.

concept of the emotionally incapable female.[29] The *viri*, however, buttress their notions of control and superiority by remembering, an implication that they will take action and vengeance, if necessary.

The quality that Tacitus most admires in the barbarian *femina*, however, is her *saepta pudicitia*.[30] Noting that she is totally ignorant of spectacles and dinner parties—another allusion to the intrigues of Roman society[31]—the historian remarks that *viri* and *feminae* do not exchange secret letters (*Ger.* 19). Without wealth there can be no intrigue, and Tacitus lauds the lowly Fenni tribe who display a nobility even in their barbaric poverty. Possessing neither weapons, horses, nor fixed abodes, they hunt and forage for herbs, dress in animal skins and sleep in earthen beds under the stars, their only wealth, their arrows. Yet, their *viri* and *feminae* share and share alike. In consequence, they are happy in their simple penury and want for nothing (*Ger.* 46).

It is to be severely doubted that Tacitus is suggesting that Rome's *viri locupletes* divest themselves of their capital gains and relocate to the wilderness in order to achieve marital bliss. Poverty and chastity in the wilds are mere symbols of a return to simpler values. The *viri* and *feminae* are moral *exempla* of the old Livian school.

Tacitus, however, does not confine such examples to the *Germania*. One discovers another such in the *Histories*, where the historian cites an unnamed *femina* from Liguria who emerges as a shining *exemplum* of *constantia* at a time when Romans of the aristocracy are engaged in a shameful internecine struggle (*Hist.* 2.13.5-9):

> Auxit invidiam praeclaro exemplo femina Ligus, quae filio abdito, cum simul pecuniam occultari milites credidissent eoque per cruciatus interrogarent ubi filium occuleret, uterum ostendens latere respondit, nec ullis deinde terroribus aut morte constantiam vocis egregiae mutavit.

Tacitus' application of *femina* with an ethnic adjective represents a distinct departure from conventional usage. Sallust, it will be recalled, referred to a *Ligus mulier*, and Livy, to a *mulier Canusina* and *Apula*, among others. Tacitus, by designating the Ligurian woman a *femina*, is emphasizing her moral excellence at a time when human nature is at its Thucydidean worst.[32] *Femina*, furthermore, evokes a pathetic yet valiant

[29] G. Clarke, "Roman women," *G&R* Ser. 2, 28:2 (1981) 207.

[30] Muellendorf (*supra*, n. 10) 308.

[31] Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 51.

[32] Sall. *H. Fr.* 2.11; Liv. 22.52.7; cf. 22.54.3. Tacitus seems to evoke Thucydides consciously in recounting the depths to which human nature could sink in the *Histories*; Book 3.83, when Vitellius' forces sack Rome and the people act as spectators, is especially reminiscent of Thucydides' account of the Corcyrean revolt, in which the populace dissociates from the horrendous events and similarly become spectators, Thuc. 3.82.

image of a woman who is noble, not by social status or Roman birth, but by her refusal to compromise her principles even when faced by death.

Compare his treatment of Claudia Sacrata, whom he designates not a *femina* but a *mulier* of the Ubians. Rumour has it that the woman has passed a night of pleasure with Petilius Cerialis, preventing him from being with his troops at the time of a German sneak-attack (*Hist.* 5.22.15-16):

> Cerialis alibi noctem egerat, ut plerique credidere, ob stuprum Claudiae Sacratae, mulieris Ubiae.

Claudia is an example of *stuprum*. As the words *plerique credidere* indicate, Tacitus is engaging in innuendo,[33] and *mulier*, so often associated with pejoratives in oratory, is a component of the author's insinuations. The word contributes to the negative picture, and will be noticed, even if only subliminally, because all the other women in the *Histories*, if specified by gender terms, are *feminae*. Claudia's barbarian birth is irrelevant to the fact that she has kept a Roman general from performing his duty: she is, therefore, a *mulier* of the worst sort.

Claudia Sacrata, however, seems but an anomaly included in the narrative as yet another blot on the murky career of Petilius Cerialis.[34] In addition, she is a Gaul, and therefore not to be compared to the average German *femina*, whom Tacitus envisions as the epitome of family solidarity, as is illustrated in his depiction of her at the scene of battle.

The *topos* of the fighting *femina*, encountered in *Ab Urbe Condita*, is one which Tacitus exploits fully in *Germania*. The historian's unconcealed admiration for the German *femina* on the battlefield stems from the fact that she takes a supporting role to her *vir*, who does all the fighting. Her British cousin, on the other hand, is castigated for having the nerve to participate actively in the hostilities, or the temerity to lead an army as *dux*. Such audacity is to be deplored, for she is transgressing into the area where she does not belong: that of her warrior *vir*.

Tacitus explains that the German fighting *vir*'s courage comes, in part, from his worship of Hercules, who is hailed in song before every battle as *primus...omnium virorum fortium* (*Ger.* 3.1). The historian makes it evident, however, that the secret weapon of the barbarian *vir fortis* is the equally courageous *femina*, who with her children stands on the sidelines, urging him on with vociferous moral support (7.3-4):[35]

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[33] Daitz (*supra*, n. 11) 46.
[34] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 88.
[35] Similar family solidarity: in the *Histories* when the Batavian Julius Civilis marshalls his female relatives to rally his men on to victory (*Hist.* 4.12-18):

> quodque praecipuum fortitudinis incitamentum est, non casus nec fortuita conglobatio turmam aut cuneum facit, sed familiae et propinquitates; et in proximo pignora unde feminarum ululatus audiri, unde vagitus infantium.

Femina, as has been demonstrated, embodies moral excellence, and like *infans*—the original meaning of which was "one who is unable to speak"—[36] it also connotes helplessness. Both the *femina* and *infans* are unable to fight physically, but each can lend moral support to the warrior *vir* by their respective *ululationes* and *vagitus*. Tacitus, in fact, remarks that the *feminae* are *sanctissimi testes* and the *infantes*, *maximi laudatores* (*Ger.* 7.4). The historian is demonstrating the heroism of the non-combatants. These are not the disorganized Livian *agmina* of *mulieres* and *pueri* who continually indulge in the tearful supplications of the defeated—the words *fletus*, *ploratus*, and *lacrimae*, punctuating their actions—who are first encountered in Julius Caesar's commentaries (*B.G.* 1.51); whom Tacitus echoes in the *Britanni palantes mixtoque virorum mulierumque ploratu* after Agricola's victory at Mons Graupius (*Ag.* 38), and parodies in the *muliebre et miserabile agmen* of Agrippina, her friends and their children, leaving Germanicus' camp in shame during the mutiny.[37]

According to Muellendorf, the ululations of the German *feminae* constitute not a *Wehklage*, but a Valkyrian battle cry, designed both to encourage their warrior *viri* and to strike terror into the hearts of the enemy as well.[38] Tacitus notes that many a hopeless battle has been won at the last minute due to the constant prayers of the *feminae* who strip the very tunics from their breasts in a demonstration of solidarity (*Ger.* 8.1). The *femina* has, in effect, staked her *pudicitia* on the outcome of the engagement, and Tacitus states emphatically that it is the sight of his *femina* in this condition, together with the thought that she might be enslaved (or worse) when captured, that spurs the German warrior on to victory (*Ger.* Ib).

Tacitus makes it evident, however, that his admiration extends to the *femina* in battle only as long as she takes a passive role and confines her support to whooping and hollering. In the *Annales*, he portrays the British *feminae* at the battle of Anglesey as part of what G. Webster

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Civilis captarum cohortium signis circumdatus, ut suo militi recens gloria ante oculos et hostes memoria cladis terrerentur, matrem suam sororesque, simul omnium coniuges parvosque liberos consistere a tergo iubet, hortamenta victoriae vel pulsis pudorem. Ut virorum cantu, feminarum ululatu sonuit acies, nequaquam par a legionibus cohortibusque redditur clamor.

[36] C.T. Lewis & Ch. Short, *A New Latin Dictionary* (N.Y., 1984) s.v. *infans*.

[37] Goodyear (*supra*, n. 20) 279-80.

[38] Muellendorf (*supra*, n. 10) 205; Liv. 38.17; Caes. *B.G.* 7.80.

characterizes as "an unruly mob in a state of high excitement," confident that their superior numbers will overwhelm the Roman forces.[39] Still terming them *feminae*, Tacitus employs Bacchanalian rhetoric to create a picture of disorganized madness that has a devastating effect upon the Roman legions who are terror-stunned at the sight (*Ann.* 14.30):[40]

> Stabat pro litore diversa acies, densa armis virisque, intercursantibus feminis; in modum Furiarum veste ferali, crinibus deiectis faces praeferebant; Druidaeque circum, preces diras sublatis ad caelum manibus fundentes, novitate aspectus perculere militem, ut quasi haerentibus membris immobile corpus vulneribus praeberent.

Note Tacitus' negative use of *muliebris* as he depicts Suetonius Paulinus calming his troops' fears, assuring them that the enemy is only a *muliebre et fanaticum agmen* and no match for the organized Roman forces. His words inspire the Romans to cut the barbarians to pieces systematically (14.30.7).

The passive but supportive role of the German *femina* in the life of her *vir* constitutes an endorsement for the Roman *femina* to do likewise, not on the battlefield—the gods forbid!—but in all affairs that are best left to Roman *viri*.[41]

Tacitus' position about Roman women anywhere near the scene of battle is unequivocal: they are a pernicious nuisance. The historian makes this point repeatedly, but especially in a mini-debate modelled upon Livy's discussion over the repeal of the Lex Oppia (*Ann.* 3.33-34). Whereas the central issue of the Livian debate was the rights of *feminae* to own and display wealth, there was also a secondary topic that concerned feminine mobility.[42] Tacitus has re-set the argument, concen-

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[39] G. Webster, *Boudica: the British Revolt against Rome, A.D. 60* (London, 1978) 99.

[40] cf. *Ann.* 14.32. Note how Tacitus continues the Bacchic imagery to depict utter chaos and hysteria at the fall of Camulodunum:

> Et feminae in furorem turbatae adesse exitium canebant, externosque fremitus in curia eorum auditos; consonuisse ululatibus theatrum visamque speciem in aestuario Tamesae subversae coloniae: iam Oceanus cruento aspectu, dilabente aestu humanorum corporum effigies relictae, ut Britannis ad spem, ita veteranis ad metum trahebantur.

[41] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 90-91.

[42] The *feminae* and *matronae*, it will be recalled, were forbidden to ride in a *vehiculum* either in or within one mile of the city (Liv. 34.1.4); furthermore, Cato inveighed against their leaving home and going about in public: *Qui hic mos est in publicum procurrendi et obsidendi vias et viros alienos appellandi*? (Liv. 34.2.9).This section, written in 1984 in Rome for my doctoral dissertation (University of Missouri, 1988), was also given as a paper at the 1992 meeting of *CAMWS* in Hamilton, Ontario. At that time I learned that J. Ginsberg had, independently, been working on the same debate, and had drawn similar conclusions. Her article, "*In Maiores certamina*: past and present in Tacitus' *Annals*," is appearing in a book forthcoming from Princeton, T.J. Luce and A.J. Woodman, eds., *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition*.

trating upon this latter subject, which in the *Annales* centers upon a proposal that wives be prohibited from accompanying their magistrate-husbands to their provincial commands.[43]

Tacitus' gender terms present a micro-version of Livy's. Each debate concerns *feminae*, i.e., aristocratic women. In Livy's presentation this may be inferred from the subject matter, which was the possession of gold, the wearing of purple garments and riding in a vehicle. In that of Tacitus, the issue is specifically the wives of magistrates. Both Livy's Cato and Tacitus' Caecina and their adversaries refer to *feminae*, but only the former pair, arguing against the women, mention *mulieres*. As Cato cited an *agmen mulierum* blocking the streets and meddling with the business of the forum, Caecina invokes a *mulierum comitatus*, clogging the roads and interfering with provincial administration in peace and war (3.33.13-14). As such disorganized throngs ran hither and thither (*procurrerint*) in Cato's day, in Caecina's, they are capable of converting an organized march into a barbarian onslaught (a description that recalls the British *intercursantibus feminis* of *Ann.* 14.30). When Caecina describes the "second State" being run by the provincial governors' wives, he employs the word *mulieres*, noting that if a magistrate is charged with maladministration he has only his wife's despotism to thank: *pervicacibus magis et impotentibus mulierum iussis*...(*Ann.* 3.33.20-21). Whether *mulier* in this context means woman or wife, Tacitus, like Livy, has employed it in a negative setting.

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[43] The episode has been subjected to much debate; A.J. Marshall sets forth the various theories, many of which concern a supposed Tacitean discourse upon women's public and moral emancipation, "Tacitus and the governor's lady: a note on *Annals* 3.33-34," *G&R*, ser. 2, 22 (1975) 13. Marshall sees the real issue to be the effect of women upon "military planning and manoeuvres," their continual interference in camp and garrison affairs, and undue influence upon provincial and civil administration (*Ibid.*, 16). He writes that the episode is "replete with bland generalities, abstract debating points and rhetorical questions," and adds that the sequence is presented as one more step down the declining path of Roman *virtus* (*Ibid.*, *loc. cit*). Although the debate may well have taken place upon the very issues addressed, several suspicious factors demonstrate it to be part of a rhetorical exercise in direct emulation of Livy. The first is the fact that the subject of women's presence in the provinces is not the central issue, but a digression (*Ann.* 3.32). The second concerns the names of the principal participants: e.g., even though Caecina plays a prominent part in books one and two, his *cognomen*, Severus, is not introduced until 3.18, suggesting that T. is presenting him as the counterpart to Cato the Elder, who argued against the Lex Oppia *severissimis moribus* (Liv. 34.6.2); T.'s Valerius Messalinus is the equivalent of L.'s Valerius Tappo. The third is the passage's direct reference to the Lex is Oppia; and the last is Tacitus' use of themes and gender expressions which mirror those employed by Livy in what has been noted to be an entirely imaginary rhetorical *tour de force*: A.E. Astin, *Cato the Censor* (Oxford, 1978) 25; cf. J. Briscoe, *A Commentary of Livy: Books XXXIV-XXXVII* (Oxford, 1981) 39-43; *v. supra*, chapter five, p. 95. cf. S.B. Pomeroy *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves. Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York, 1975) 180.

The Femina *as* Dux: *a Tacitean Obsession*

Tacitus employs *femina* repeatedly in contexts of usurpation of male power. He couples the noun with catchwords such as *dux*, *dominatio*, and *imperium* that imply that the *femina* has imposed *servitium* and loss of *libertas* on her nation.[44] Repetition of *femina* in pejorative contexts not only conveys Tacitus' general disapproval of feminine behavior but also reveals his negative opinion of women as field-marshals and rulers, and reinforces Roman phobias about women in power. Tacitus' use of the noun *femina* with terms denoting male authority is significant. He is placing the culpability not on *mulieres* but on *feminae* of the highest order. Each *femina* either wields power in her own right or is portrayed as usurping power that rightfully belongs to a magistrate or emperor.

In *Agricola*, the phrase *femina duce* in contexts of *saevitia*, *servitus*, and lost *libertas*, not only illustrates Boudicca's ruthlessness, but also implies her role as *dominatrix* (16.1; 31.4). Tacitus makes war seem the logical consequence of feminine rule:

> Boudicca generis regii femina duce (neque enim sexum in imperiis discernunt) sumpsere universi [Britanni] bellum (*Ag.* 16.1).

Tacitus echoes these words in an oration by the chieftain Calgacus, who cites Boudicca's abortive attempt to cast off the Roman yoke: *Brigantes femina duce exurere coloniam* (*Ag.* 31.4). Noting that *socordia* neutralized her efforts, Calgacus then implies the undesirability of feminine leadership by comparison, noting that his Caledonians are real *viri* who are *integri* and *indomiti in libertatem* (*Ib.*).

Boudicca is the epitome of the *femina dux*, and Tacitus presents her as the virago who defies a mighty power.[45] The historian has created an unforgettable portrait of the Icenian queen in the *Annales*, where she rides with her children in a chariot, exhorting tribe after tribe to action, because Roman envoys have scourged her and raped her daughters. Boudicca begins her oration, explaining that although Britons are used to being led by a *femina* in war (*feminarum ducto bellare*), she is now addressing them not as a queen, but as *una e vulgo*; and like a Livian tribune of old, Boudicca presents herself as an *ultrix* of lost *libertas* and violated *pudicitia* (*Ann.* 14.35). Then she spits a final alliterative epigram at her warriors: *id mulieri destinatum; viverent viri et servirent*! Webster notes that the line is so tightly epigrammatic that its meaning

[44] D.C. Earl connects *dominatio* with loss of *libertas*, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome* (Ithaca, 1967) 59.

[45] Webster (*supra*, n. 39) 13. He also notes that Boudicca's name (which he spells with one C) means Victoria, but Tacitus probably did not know its Celtic signification.

is lost in most translations, the point being: "Follow me, a mere woman, or as strong men, submit to the Roman yoke and live in servitude!"[46] Tacitus has created a chiasmus of ideas; for *mulieres* normally serve, and *viri* customarily lead. Boudicca, however, demands just the opposite; Tacitus implies that when a *femina* is *dux*, *viri* will, as a matter of course, be enslaved.

Similarly, in *Germania*, Tacitus states that the tribe of Sithones differs from other Germanic clans *quod femina dominatur: in tantum non modo a libertate sed etiam a servitute degenerant* (45.9). He reiterates the idea in the *Histories*, employing *femina* in context of *dominatio*, of *Veleda* (5.24-25), who exercises *auctoritas* over her tribe (4.61). He notes that if the Batavians must choose *dominatio*, according to Julius Civilis, they should opt for that of the Romans rather than that of a *femina* (*Hist.* 5.25.11):

> Proximum id libertati; et si dominorum electio sit, honestius principes Romanorum quam Germanorum feminas tolerari.

Military leadership is but a stepping-stone to absolute power; Tacitus again equates feminine rule with slavery in the *Annales*. *Femina* coupled with *imperium* illustrates the failed Armenian experiment with feminine rule: *temptato feminae imperio*, the Armenians were led for a time by Queen Erato, whose expulsion leaves the country *magis sine domino quam in libertate* (2.4.6); similarly *femina* emphasizes Cartimandua's misrule of the Brigantians: *stimulante ignominia, ne feminae imperio subderentur* (12.40.16).

The *femina* as *dux* is a recurrent theme of the *Annales*. Iterated in contexts of *imperium*, it emphasizes feminine usurpation of power and eventual enslavement of the nation. The elder Agrippina is a feminine *dux*, whose *ingens anima* does not negate the reality expressed by Tiberius: when a *femina* reviews the maniples (with the infant son of the rightful *dux* in tow) the *imperator* may as well resign (1.69).[47]

Agrippina's foil, Plancina, likewise usurps male authority, Tacitus implies: her supervision of military exercises exceeds the *decora* of a *femina* (2.55); when the consul eventually exposes her to the Senate, Tacitus writes: *praesidisse nuper feminam exercitio cohortium* (3.33.13-14), which he echoes when Agrippina the younger, who, like Plancina

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[46] *Ibid*, 99-100. Boudicca has doffed her regal *persona* as ruler and, therefore, *femina*; when speaking as *una e vulgo*, she is a *mulier*, the term that signifies "mere woman." Adams, who calls her diatribe "a feminist statement", believes *mulier* to have been uttered "with ironical self-contempt" (*supra*, n. 24) 244. His interpretation imposes anachronisms on Tacitus' text.

[47] Marshall (*supra*, n. 43) 14; Rutland (*supra*, n. 8) 16.

has overstepped feminine *decora*, presides, *conspicua* in cloth-of-gold, on her own tribunal (12.37. 15-16):

> Novum sane et moribus veterum insolitum feminam signis Romanis praesidere: ipsa semet parti a maioribus suis imperii sociam ferebat .

The Plancina episode is pivotal. Embedded in the debate over the propriety of provincial governors taking their wives on military campaigns where consequent *licentia* renders their sex *saevum, ambitiosum*, and *potestatis avidum*, it foreshadows Agrippina's similar usurpation, not only by iterating *praesidere* and *femina*, but also by citing the repeal of the Lex Oppia that once restricted *muliebris inpotentia*. Tacitus, borrowing from Livy, characterizes the abrogation of the law as a breaking of restraints: *vinclis exsolutis*. When Agrippina officiates on her own tribunal, Tacitus literalizes the metaphor, referring to the vanquished Britons, who file by paying her homage (12.37.13-15):

> Atque illi vinclis absoluti Agrippinam quoque, haud procul alio suggestu conspicuam, isdem quibus principem laudibus gratibusque venerati sunt.

Agrippina's imperial arrogance has surpassed all bounds; success has gone to her head. The epitome of hubris, she rides to the capitol in her private *carpentum*. Tacitus, observing that the *carpentum* had been reserved from time immemorial for priests and sacred objects,[48] implies that a *femina* was actually being worshipped: *concessus venerationem augebat feminae* (12.42)—a precedent unparalleled in Roman history. Agrippina has compounded her other iniquities by rivalling the gods, and, as the baleful *omina* of the next chapter demonstrate, she will be cast down from her pinnacle and destroyed (*Ann.* 12.43).

Feminae who preside over armies are obviously after greater stakes, and Tacitus reiterates Agrippina's ulterior agenda, to become *imperii socia* (12.37), when Nero explains why she had to be liquidated (14.11):

> Adiciebat crimina longius repetita, quod consortium imperii iuraturasque in feminae verba praetorias cohortis idemque dedecus senatus et populi speravisset.

The *femina* as *dux* epitomizes *muliebris inpotentia*; she furthermore represents a reversal of gender roles: Tacitus brands Agrippina's rule a *virile servitium* that has overturned (*versa*) the State. In the beginning of the *Annales* he has employed *femina* of Livia in context of *muliebris impotentia* to indicate a similar reversal (1.4.17-20):

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[48] Mendell (*supra*, n. 7) 150; Tacitus has forgot that the *carpentum* was Tanaquil's transportation (Liv. 1.34.8). Dio relates that both Agrippina and Messalina had been granted the privilege of riding in a *carpentum* (60.2; 60.33.2).

> Accedere matrem muliebri impotentia: serviendum feminae duobusque insuper adulescentibus qui rem publicam interim premant quandoque distrahant.

Once again, the empire is in thrall to a *femina* (12.7.10-15):

> Versa ex eo civitas et cuncta feminae oboediebant, non per lasciviam, ut Messalina, rebus Romanis inludenti. Adductum et quasi virile servitium: palam severitas ac saepius superbia; nihil domi impudicum, nisi dominationi expediret. Cupido auri immensa obtentum habebat, quasi subsidium regno pararetur.

Impotentia muliebris is again triumphant (12.57.12), but now with portentous results. Where formerly the *domus Caesaris* was the chief victim of feminine-imposed servitude (1.10), now the entire empire has been so subjected. Tacitus almost makes Messalina's bacchanalian excesses sound like the good old days[49] as he unsexes Agrippina with her almost *virilis* chastity.[50] Agrippina's despotism is an exaltation of *impotentia muliebris* that the elevated term, *femina*, running like a gilded thread through the narrative, has intensified.

Tacitus, the Verbal Artist

Although it has been repeatedly denied that Tacitus is misogynistic,[51] his continual harping upon the *femina* as *dux* who aspires to *dominatio* or *imperium* demonstrates a genuine belief that the decline and fall of the Julio-Claudians and the subsequent evils that overwhelmed the empire could all be laid at the doors of that family's overweening and imperious *feminae*. His philosophy is put into the mouth of Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.69). Tacitus' disgust for that emperor does not prevent him from assigning

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[49] Tacitus has employed the classic method of defamation for Messalina, the Bacchanale (*Ann.* 11.31):

> At Messalina non alias solutior luxu, adulto autumno simulacrum vindemiae per domum celebrabat. Urgeri prela, fluere lacus; et feminae pellibus accinctae adsultabant ut sacrificantes vel insanientes Bacchae; ipsa crine fluxo thyrsum quatiens, iuxtaque Silius hedera vinctus, gerere cothurnos, iacere caput, strepente circum procaci choro. Ferunt Vettium Valentem lascivia in praealtam arborem conisum, interrogantibus quid aspiceret, respondisse tempestatem ab Ostia atrocem, sive coeperat ea species, seu forte lapsa vox in praesagium vertit.

S. Dickison cites the episode as one of the few comic moments in the *Annales* and believes that Tacitus is inverting gender roles: "Claudius, *Saturnalicius Princeps*," *Latomus* 36 (1977) 635; J. Colin takes it to represent an actual Bacchic rite: "Tacite et Messaline," *LEC* 24 (1956) 25-39. The passage patently evokes the usual rhetoric of Cicero, Livy, *et. al.*, intended to tarnish a woman's reputation; it was very likely concocted soon after Messalina's death in order to justify her murder. Tacitus has chosen his words in order to defame Messalina.

[50] Rutland (*supra*, n. 8) 23.

[51] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 84; Syme (*supra*, n. 17) 41; perhaps "maliciously chauvinistic" would be more apt.

Tiberius significant "truths". Note that as the Emperor's thoughts become more pessimistic the *femina* becomes a *mulier* in the context of *seditio* (*Ib.* 11-16):

> Nihil relictum imperatoribus, ubi femina manipulos intervisat, signa adeat largitionem temptet, tamquam parum ambitiose filium ducis gregali habitu circumferat Caesaremque Caligulam appellari velit. Potiorem iam apud exercitus Agrippinam quam legatos, quam duces; compressam a muliere seditionem, cui nomen principis obsistere non quiverit.

Tacitus is an artist, applying his words like tints and shades from a richly coloured pallette. *Mulier* not only lends variety to the passage, but, employed in a pejorative context with *seditio*—a condition that has been termed *muliebris* by Livy (34.3.8), the noun also contributes a somber tone to the darkening mirror of Tiberius' mind. I.S. Ryberg has designated the "choice and arrangement" of words as one of the most subtle of all forms of innuendo; and R. Martin seconds this, noting that Tacitus uses his vocabulary to influence his readers' opinions, often drawing from the works of his predecessors for words and phrases that will lend emphasis to an idea or character.[52]

Tacitus is said to have made his reputation in oratory.[53] His use of gender terms constitutes a miniscule testimonial to his skill and artistry. For although he is able to hammer home a point with the obviousness of Cicero, as when he harps upon the *viri* and *feminae inlustres*, *nobilissimi*, *primores*, etc., who are victims of the Julio-Claudians, he is equally capable of subtly weaving his gender terms into the narrative as components of *variatio* and verbal antithesis that contribute to his technique of characterizaton.[54] This is illustrated in his portrait of Epicharis, the freedwoman of the Pisonian conspiracy against Nero.

Epicharis is a *libertina mulier* (*Ann.* 15.57.11), but she is vastly different from the stereotypical Hispala, Livy's once-Bacchanalian *scortum*-with-the-heart-of-gold who burst into hysterics when confronted by consular authority. There was a patent falsity about Hispala due to Livy's one-dimensional portrait, which seems to have been predicated upon comic as well as prejudicial class stereotypes.[55] Tacitus' portrait of Epicharis is far from one-dimensional. There is an element of ambiguity in her *persona*,[56] based perhaps upon the idea that she is an ex-

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[52] I.S. Ryberg, "Tacitus' art of innuendo," *TAPA* 73 (1942) 390; Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 225.

[53] *Ibid.*, 29.

[54] Daitz (*supra*, n. 11) 46.

[55] *v. supra*, chapter two, p. 45, for stereotypes depicted in the *Two Bacchises* of Plautus. Also *v. supra*, chapter five, p. 99, sq.

[56] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 85.

slave and a conspirator—facts which are offset to some extent in that the object of conspiracy is the tyrannical Nero. Gender words contribute to the ambiguous picture and also heighten the eventual heroism that overrides Epicharis' dubious background. Epicharis is introduced with a malicious comment (15.51.2-3):[57]

> ...Epicharis quaedam, incertum quonam modo sciscitata (neque illi ante ulla rerum honestarum cura fuerat).

Tacitus continues to dwell upon the unsavoury side of her character by hinting darkly at an alliance with a disgruntled assassin of Agrippina (15.51.7-13):

> Erat nauarchus in ea classe Volusius Proculus, occidendae matris Neroni inter ministros, non ex magnitudine sceleris provectus, ut rebatur. Is mulieri olim cognitus, seu recens orta amicitia, dum merita erga Neronem sua et quam in inritum cecidissent aperit adicitque questus et destinationem vindictae, si facultas oreretur, spem dedit posse impelli et pluris conciliare.

While *mulier* is the appropriate word based upon Epicharis' position as freedwoman, Tacitus again indulges in innuendo, as is indicated by the word *seu*.[58] *Mulier* juxtaposed to *amicitia* with a base assassin contributes to the pejorative picture, and one might feel that Epicharis has earned her just deserts when Proculus, in fact a dastardly *delator*, informs upon her to Nero—except for the fact that she has recognized the true enormity of the tyrant's crimes: *et omnia scelera principis orditur, neque senatui quidquam manere* (15.51.17). It has been said that Tacitus chose the vocabulary that went into his verbal slurs with great care.[59] *Is mulieri olim cognitus, seu recens orta amicitia* is a pungent phrase full of hidden implications that *mulier* with its customary pejorative overtones intensifies.

Note Tacitus' use of *muliebre* when Epicharis has been arrested and brought to the palace for interrogation. The historian describes her through Nero's eyes in a passage that seethes with cruelty as the Emperor gloats upon her *muliebre corpus* and reflects that it is undoubtedly *impar dolori* as he orders her to be put on the rack (*Ann.* 15.57.1-2). Tacitus now takes the role of omniscient narrator, and employs *femina* as part of a value judgment as Epicharis refuses to betray the conspiracy, and the tormentors redouble their efforts rather than be thwarted by a *femina* (15.57.3-5):

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[57] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 85.
[58] Daitz (*supra*, n. 11) 46.
[59] *Ibid.*, 46.

> At illam non verbera, non ignes, non ira eo acrius torquentium ne a femina spernerentur, pervicere, quin obiecta denegaret.

As Tacitus has demonstrated in the *Histories* (2.13.5-9), a *femina* does not give into pain or threats of death.[60] The historian, nevertheless, resists the temptation to "promote" Epicharis herself to the status of *femina*, a patently Ciceronian device employed by Livy.[61] When Epicharis strangles herself in her bonds rather than talk, Tacitus praises her as a *clariore exemplo libertina mulier* (*Ann.* 15.57.11). His precise purpose is to emphasize Epicharis' low status in order to offset the aristocratic *viri* who are informing upon their relatives, even without having submitted to torture (15.57.11-14):

> clariore exemplo libertina mulier in tanta necessitate alienos ac prope ignotos protegendo, cum ingenui et viri et equites Romani senatoresque intacti tormentis carissima suorum quisque pignorum proderent.

The historian is equally artful in his application of gender terms for Nero's mother, Agrippina. They are used to indicate her high status, and to reflect the opinions of others upon her character. Although Tacitus has employed various rhetorical devices to illustrate her malevolent character,[62] Agrippina is far from being a stock villainess, thanks to Tacitus' verbal artistry.[63] The historian introduces her in sympathetic contexts that emphasize her erudition as well as her imperial family connections.[64] He also presents her—along with the *nobilis femina*, Junia Silana—as a victim of Messalina, noting that the empress' persecution of Agrippina evoked popular pity (*Ann.* 11.12). In the sweepstakes for Claudius' new wife—a competiton that *nec minore ambitu feminae exarserant* (*Ann.* 12.1.4)—Agrippina is praised by Pallas as a *femina expertae fecunditatis, integra iuventa* (*Ann.* 12.2.11-12). *Femina*, in this context, implies more than social status; it belongs to the language of *laudatio*, and implies the moral superiority of the aristocratic woman whose fecundity will perpetuate the domination of the ruling classes.[65] Soon, however, rumours of *inclitus amor* and avuncular incest are rampant. The love-blinded Claudius, though, obviates any objections that the Senate might raise, announcing that he has decided to choose a

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[60] *v. supra*, pp. 133-34.

[61] *v. supra*, chapters one and five. The device rings falsely when Petronius applies it to the Widow of Ephesus, *v. infra*, pp. 182-84 .

[62] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 7) 94; Rutland (supra n. 8) 22-23.

[63] Mendell (*supra*, n. 7) 148-50.

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] P. Csillag, *The Augustan Laws on Family Relations* (Budapest, 1976) 20.

feminam nobilitate puerperiis sanctimonia insignem. He thereupon informs the conscript fathers that he graciously accepts their choice of a wife, even though she be his own brother's daughter (*Ann.* 12.6). Claudius has "pulled the wool over the eyes" of the Senate by perpetrating an incestuous marriage upon *SPQR*. Such an act can only have disastrous results for the country.

Tacitus has employed *femina* to emphasize Agrippina's imperial rank as well as her abuse of power. He changes his terminology, however, in relating her sudden plummet. When she begins to lose control, she shrieks and rages *muliebriter* (*Ann.* 13.13), and Agrippina's *superbia muliebris* disgusts Nero (13.14).[66] Subsequently rediscovering her dormant sexuality, Agrippina lavishes *blandimenta* upon her increasingly disaffected son; and what Suetonius states lewdly, Tacitus sneers obliquely.[67] As Agrippina oversteps the limits of decency, Tacitus dusts off the Ciceronian *mulier* with pejoratives to express the disgust of Nero's friends (13.13.16-18):

> Quae mutatio neque Neronem fefellit, et proximi amicorum metuebant orabantque cavere insidias mulieris semper atrocis, tum et falsae.

Tacitus has used "*mutatio*": as Agrippina changes from the abnormally chaste and power-crazed dowager to the revolting degenerate who would use sex with her own son to recoup her lost pre-eminence, Tacitus' gender terms also undergo permutation. The once proud *femina* is now a *mulier*, as *atrox* and *falsa* as the *insidiae* hatched in her warped brain.

Tacitus uses *mulier* as a key-word in contexts of *impudicitia*; it serves as a verbal *Leitmotif* for Poppaea Sabina, Pontia, and Satria Galla. Syme remarks that Poppaea is immediately established as a "seductive and potent influence for evil," whose character, if not fully developed, is nevertheless highly stylized.[68] Poppaea, the beautiful temptress, is presented according to one side of her personality only, like many of Tacitus' minor characters.[69] The historian foreshadows her entrance with the tale of another seductress, Pontia.[70] The word *mulier* in the pejorative context of *impudicitia* helps set the stage.

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[66] Rutland (*supra*, n. 8) 25.

[67] Tum Agrippina versis artibus per blandimenta iuvenem adgredi, suum potius cubiculum ac sinum offerre contingendis quae prima aetas et summa fortuna expeterent: quin et fatebatur intempestivam severitatem et suarum opum, quae haud procul imperatoriis aberant, copias tradebat, ut nimia nuper coercendo filio, ita rursum intemperanter demissa (*Ann.* 13.13.9-15).

[68] Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958) 353.

[69] Mendell (*supra*, n. 7) 146; 159.

[70] Baldwin notes Poppaea's swift introduction after the story of Pontia (supra, n. 7) 86.

Pontia is a *mulier nupta* whose affair with Octavius Sagitta, tribune of the plebs, is a sordid one which Tacitus describes in terms of *vaecordia* that Cicero might have used of Clodius (13.44.1-4):[71]

> Per idem tempus Octavius Sagitta plebei tribunus, Pontiae mulieris nuptae amore vaecors, ingentibus donis adulterium et mox ut omitteret maritum emercatur, suum matrimonium promittens ac nuptias eius pactus.

Pontia, however, coyly holds out for a better offer (13.44.5-7):

> Sed ubi mulier vacua fuit, nectere moras, adversam patris voluntatem causari repertaque spe ditioris coniugis promissa exuere.

After bemoaning lost reputation and funds, the frustrated tribune waits until dark and steals into Pontia's bedroom where he hurls recriminations and a dagger at her, the murder taking place amidst a barrage of Bacchanalian rhetoric.[72]

Although Pontia's murder seems to be based upon fact (Tacitus refers to it in the *Histories* (4.44) where he terms Sagitta, *impotens amoris.*), the circumstances of the episode are, very likely, fictitious. Pontia, an ensign of *impudicitia*, called a *mulier* twice, has probably been introduced solely to foreshadow another adulteress and *mulier*, who transfers her affections for gain, and who will suffer an equally ignominious end at the hands of her paramour. Tacitus frequently uses rhetorical emphasis in the *Annales*[73] and Quintilian cites the introduction of fictitious characters and circumstances as well as the repetition of words as an important factor when an orator wishes to exaggerate a point (*Inst. Orat.* 9.1.31; 33). As Pontia has procrastinated in the fulfillment of promises to the tribune, so Poppaea leads the Emperor on (but not too long). As Pontia has driven Octavius insane with love, so Poppaea drives Nero to distraught rage. Each *mulier* pays for her adultery with her life.

Impudicitia is the common denominator between the two portrayals, and Tacitus, just before introducing Poppaea, remarks:

> Non minus insignis eo anno impudicitia magnorum rei publicae malorum initium fecit. Erat in civitate Sabina Poppaea...(13.45.1-2).

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[71] *Sest.* 117; *Har. Resp.* 19; *Dom.* 141; I. Opelt notes that *vecordia* is an attribute of Marius in Sall. *B.J.* 94.9, *Die Lateinischen Schimpfwörter mit verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen: eine Typologie* (Heidelberg, 1965) 142.

[72] Statuitur nox, et Pontia consciae ancillae custodiam cubiculi mandat. Ille uno cum liberto ferrum veste occultum infert. Tum, ut adsolet in amore et ira, iurgia preces, exprobatio satisfactio; et pars tenebrarum libidini seposita; ex qua quasi incensus nihil metuentem ferro transverberat et adcurrentem ancillam vulnere absterret cubiculoque prorumpit (*Ann.* 13.44.11-17).

[73] J. Cousin, "Rhétorique et psychologie chez Tacite: un aspect de la *deinosis*," *REL* 29 (1951) 238.

Poppaea's entire portrait is a literary and rhetorical pastiche. Syme and others have commented upon its resemblance to Sallust's Sempronia, the alleged Catilinarian.[74] There are not only Sallustian evocations, however, but also Petronian and Ciceronian as well. Tacitus has couched Poppaea's introduction in the language of *fabula* reminiscent of Petronius' initial presentation of the Widow of Ephesus, only in reverse, since that fabulous creature was the epitome of *pudicitia*:

> Matrona quaedam Ephesi tam notae erat pudicitiae, ut vicinarum quoque generum feminas ad spectaculum sui evocaret (*Sat.* 111).

Because of Poppaea's splendid forebears, one would expect her to be designated a *femina*, were anyone but Tacitus writing. Poppaea, however, is sailing under false colours, having filched the name of her maternal grandfather in order to avoid that of her father Ollius, who was a friend of Sejanus—a fact in itself enough to assassinate her character. Consequently, the historian invokes Sallust's Sempronia in a passage that emphasizes Poppaea's deceit:[75] *Huic mulieri cuncta alia fuere praeter honestum animum* (*Ann.* 13.45.6).

Tacitus next turns to Cicero, recalling the *Pro Caelio*, where the ghost of Appius Claudius compares the *mulier* Clodia to the great Claudian *feminae* of the past (*Cael.* 34). Tacitus writes: *Quippe mater eius, aetatis suae feminas pulchritudine supergressa*...(*Ann.* 12.45.7). One cannot help but notice the difference between *mulier* and *femina* when the two are juxtaposed, especially after the former has been used pejoratively for the third time in close succession, and the latter has been contrasted in a positive context with the former.

Words as well as ideas have been carefully arranged in the portraits of Pontia and Poppaea. Tacitus repeats forms of *adulterium*, *matrimonium*, *libido*, and *mora*. Where the adulteress Pontia puts off marriage: *sed ubi mulier vacua fuit nectere moras* (13.44.4), the adulteress Poppaea does just the opposite: *nec mora quin adulterio matrimonium iungeretur* (13.45.20). The language of both portraits is highly artificial and demonstrates that Tacitus was striving for special effect, and that his choice of the negative *mulier* and the positive *femina* was deliberate.

Tacitus resorts to *femina* when Otho extols his wife's elegant beauty to Nero (13.46.1-3). The historian uses *femina* editorially as he offers his

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[74] Syme (*supra*, n. 68) 139; Martin (*supra* n. 1) 225. There are also evocations of Sallust's Aurelia Orestilla, *cuius praeter formam nihil umquam bonus laudavit* (*BC* 15.2) and Tacitus' later portrayal of Satria Galla: *quam degenerem et sola corporis forma commendatam*...(15.59).

[75] Sallust, *B.C.* 25.

usual alternative motives for his characters' behaviour:[76] Otho was either *amore incautus*, or else he wanted to assert his own influence over the Emperor, mutual possession of the same *femina* forging a bond between them. Tacitus' choice of *femina* in this instance is based upon rank: the word emphasizes Poppaea's beauty and refinement as well as her nobility.

Poppaea's character has been envisioned as an embodiment of anti-stoic ideas.[77] Although this may be so, Poppaea, like Agrippina before her, is little more than the stereotype of the *mulier* who influences the tyrant figure by a strong application of blandishments.[78] Like Agrippina, Poppaea will receive her just deserts; but her demise must be properly foreshadowed by another *mulier* who is a symbol of *impudicitia*, Satria Galla. Satria is the wife of the conspirator Piso, who, for her sake, left a will filled with grovelling praise for Nero. There are definite allusions to the Otho-Poppaea-Nero triangle in the passage (15.59.21-26):

> Testamentum foedis adversus Neronem adulationibus amori uxoris dedit, quam degenerem et sola corporis forma commendatam amici matrimonio abstulerat. Nomen mulieri Satria Galla, priori marito Domitius Silus; hic patientia, illa impudicitia Pisonis infamiam propagavere.

Like the *mulier* Poppaea, Satria is to be praised only for her beauty; a paragon of *impudicitia*, she has gone from her husband's bed to Piso's (as Poppaea has gone from Otho's to Nero's). Satria is also responsible for Piso's name living on in infamy, and Tacitus implies that Nero's women have performed the same function for him.

All the threads of the narrative from Pontia through Satria to Poppaea are gathered up when Tacitus announces Poppaea's death. As Pontia was killed by her lover in an outburst of *amor* and *ira*, so Poppaea is murdered

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[76] Daitz (*supra*, n. 11) 46.

[77] Mendell (*supra*, n. 7) 158.

[78] Sed accepto aditu Poppaea primum per blandimenta et artis valescere, imparem cupidini se et forma Neronis captam simulans, mox acri iam principis amore ad superbiam vertens (*Ann.* 13.46.8-10).

Agrippina and Poppaea employ *artes* as well as *blandimenta* to seduce Nero (13.13.9; 13.46.8). These imply incantations to procure love; T. has also stated that Agrippina has used *artes* upon Claudius, whom she poisoned (12.59.2). *Blandimenta* and *artes* pertain to the language of witchcraft. Verbs of transformation (i.e. *vertens*; *versis*) and *blandimenta* and *artes* in night-time scenes of seduction derive not only from the rhetoric of magic, but also of the Bacchanale. T. has cast both of these women in the subliminal roles of witches; cf. Livy's Damarata (24.22.8). Tacitus also stresses Agrippina's erudition (4.53.9-12) and implies that Poppaea was of high intelligence (13.45.10) in a Sallustian passage. Sallust employed the word *docta* for Sempronia. *Docta* is another name for witch. E.E. Burris, "The terminology of witchcraft," *CP* 31 (1936) 139. Brewers of love-potions were *veneficae* (Ib.). cf. E. Massoneau, *La Magie dans l'Antiquité Romain* (Paris, 1934) 87. These ideas pertain to the adulteress-poisoner *topos*, as employed by the Orator of *Ad Herennium* (4.16.23); the elder Seneca (Contr. 6.6; 7.3.6); and Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 5.11.39).

by her lover-turned-husband in an explosion of *iracundia*, prompted by the excessive love of his wife: *amori uxoris obnoxius erat* (16.6.1-5). Otho, Piso and Nero are each *amore uxoris incautus*: Otho has foolishly praised his wife's beauty and lost her; Piso, out of misplaced love, has betrayed his principles by stooping to flatter the very tyrant he was trying to overthrow; and Nero has destroyed those things of which he was the most desirous, the hope of an heir, and the wife with whom he was so insanely in love. As for the *mulieres*, *impudicitia* has been the ruin of all; and Tacitus finishes Poppaea's portrait as he began it, by recalling her *impudicitia* (16.7.1-2).

R. Syme notes a "sharp divergence in structure and emphasis" in the latter books of the *Annales*, and cites the "high show" given to the imperial women, whom he terms "arrogant and criminal females", brushing aside scholarly objections about rhetorical exaggeration and distortion.[79] He insists that such objections serve "to misconceive the nature of court life under the Caesars."[80] He also expresses doubts about any "lessons of morality" contained in Tacitean portrayals, noting that the historian's moral and political doctrines are "not unequivocal."[81]

Syme's faith in the criminality and arrogance of the Julio-Claudian women, as well as his "dubitation" of Tacitus' moral position, is testimony to the historian's consummate literary artistry. As R. Martin notes, Tacitus adapted his language "to the expression of his thought, which is both subtle and complex, with its intermeshing of objective and subjective, and its frequent displacement of emphasis from statement of action to the suggestion of motive or the reaction of interested parties." He adds that it is "only by understanding the nature of Tacitus' linguistic virtuosity" that comprehension of the historian's purposes in its application can be reached.[82] Tacitus' equivocal moral position in the *Annales* lies in the fact that he has taken conventional attitudes toward virtue and vice (which are so apparent in his early works) and has disguised them in a masquerade of linguistic and rhetorical brilliance, based upon brevity, asymmetry, and the careful selection of a colourful vocabulary.[83]

Tacitus' use of gender terminology is but a minute example of his linguistical virtuosity. Martin also comments upon Tacitus' selection

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[79] Syme (*supra*, n. 17) 40-41.
[80] *Ibid.*, 41.
[81] *Ibid.*, 43.
[82] Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 10.
[83] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

and arrangement of material for emphasis and special effect, and calls attention to the fact that the "unity of the whole is sustained by a style that combines brilliance with tonal subtleties." He concludes that "much of Tacitus' originality consists of putting new wines into old bottles."[84] Tacitus' novel and artful use of gender terms in the *Annales*—designations which connote moral overtones—is illustrative of this proposition; although one cannot help but conclude that the "new wine" has been carefully blended and decanted with a measure of the aged Ciceronian vintage.

[84] Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 11.

PART TWO

THE LETTER, THE BIOGRAPHY, AND THE NOVEL

CHAPTER EIGHT

C. PLINIUS SECUNDUS: MAN OF LETTERS

It is difficult to read the epistles of Pliny the Younger without being reminded of Cicero. Like the republican senator, Pliny, as a young man, journeyed from the provinces to Rome, made a career in oratory and scaled the *cursus honorum*, reaching the consulship. Like his predecessor, Pliny was a compulsive writer of letters to his *amici* and *familiares*.[1] But whereas Cicero's briefs were spontaneous and chatty—often revealing the genuine joys and frustrations that were usually cocooned in swathes of oratorical afflatus—Pliny's epistles, though they may have originated as actual letters, were honed and refined for publication.[2] Their "studied simplicity" is smudged by traces of lamp-soot, as it were, particularly when one compares them to his official correspondence with the Emperor Trajan, a compendium that shows no signs of revision.[3]

Like Cicero, Pliny was susceptible to flattery; but where his republican predecessor remained blissfully impervious to his monumental conceit,[4] Pliny self-consciously risks being thought "*iactantior*" as he imparts how Fadius Rufinus, a municipal equestrian, has made his day by pointing him out to a visiting friend-from-the-country as a famous orator. Fadius' perspicacity earns him the appellation, *vir egregius* (9.23.4).[5] In a similar manner, Pliny applauds the excellent taste of Pomponius Mamilianus, consul suffect for 100 A.D. The author, who has just sent a book of his poetry to Pomponius, elicits a favourable review by hailing him as *vir eruditissimus, gravissimus ac super ista verissimus* (9.25.2). These examples are yet another demonstration of the possibilities of *vir* in the lexicon of the sycophant.

A.N. Sherwin-White maintains that Pliny, who revelled in simple vocabulary but complex sentence structure, imitated Cicero very little; consequently, Pliny's letters are not "Ciceronian".[6] Although the obser-

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[1] A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny: a Historical and Social Commentary* (Oxford, 1966) 69.

[2] *Ibid.*, 11.

[3] *Ibid.*, 5.

[4] Reflected in *vir*-plus-superlatives, which Cicero used to flatter those who agreed with his opinion.

[5] *v. infra*, n. 13.

[6] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 2.

vation may hold true for the substance of the letters, it does not apply to their gender terminology, which frequently resounds with distinct Ciceronian echoes. In fact, Pliny uses some of the same gender expressions with their accompanying politically-oriented adjectives as did the Republican orator. In Pliny's letters, however, the terms seem curiously archaic, as if they have been retrieved from the cobwebbed corner of some lexical museum, dusted off, and repolished for use. This is because Pliny is living in a Rome that has changed vastly since the golden era of cutthroat factional politics, when "*novus homo*" was a dirty word, the man from the next town was an *inquilinus*, and the term "tribune" was synonymous with "tumult". Now, *novi homines* enter the Senate by droves, foreign is fashionable, and tribune trouble has been defused by juggling the *cursus honorum* so that the office is open only to established senators.[7]

Pliny was a Transpadane serving a Spanish emperor; he had migrated to Rome in Flavian days, studying rhetoric with Quintilian in order to make a career at the bar.[8] Although the Roman political world had undergone cataclysmic permutations, forensic training had become crystallized into a constant rehearsal of artificial *suasoriae* and *controversiae* that utilized the same stale *topoi* and perpetuated their accompanying rhetorical cant.[9] In Pliny's letters, familiar-sounding terms often appear in an alien setting. An instance is his designation of Claudius Aristion, *princeps Ephesiorum*, as *homo munificus, et innoxie popularis* (6.31.3). *Homo munificus* reflects Ciceronian condescending praise for municipal leaders and lesser foreigners, an appropriate epithet for a man whose family has held the franchise only a short time.[10] *Popularis*, however, has travelled far from the days when it was slung at tribunes of the plebs; in the modern world of second-century Rome, the term may be applied to foreigners who have been enlisting clients by inviting them to extravagant banquets.[11] Thus has familiar rhetoric of the Republic, because of political realities, assumed new overtones.

As in Cicero's day, the *boni* are on hand in the persons of *optimi* and *summi viri*;[12] but where in the olden days the title signified those who

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[7] *Ibid.*, 73.

[8] *Ibid.*, 70.

[9] D.L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (N.Y., 1957), *suasoria*: 218-28; *controversiae*: 228-50; cf. L. Alfonsi, "Carracteristiche della letteratura Giulio-Claudia," in *ANRW* 32.1, pp. 4-6.

[10] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 392.

[11] D.C. Earl writes that political terms were constantly being redefined according to expediency: *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome* (Ithaca, 1967) 19-20.

[12] *Optimi viri*: Mettius Modestus, a judge of the Centumviral Court (1.5.5); Vestricius

happened to lean on the same side of the political fence, in the enlightened Trajanic era, that barrier itself has been transformed into the forensic bar; and *optimus, summus*, or *egregius vir* can be applied to legal colleagues—equestrians, praetorians and consulars, most of whom in Pliny's circle are *aficionados* of literature and the arts.[13] The term *boni* itself has assumed a fusty air, as can be deduced from a letter of recommendation for an up-and-coming quaestor elect, Asinius Bassus, addressed to Pliny's close friend, Minicius Fundanus (4.15.1). Pliny writes that Bassus is the son of Asinius Rufus, *homo eximius*, and, with a Ciceronian turn of phrase, *amantissimus bonorum*. The obsolescence of the republican catchword can be inferred from Pliny's wry remark: "*Cur enim non me quoque inter bonos numerem*?" Since Rufus was a praetorian senator,[14] and the *homo praetorius* of Cicero's day had been upgraded to the *vir praetorius* of Pliny's, one would think that he would employ *vir*.[15] The scope of the letter, however, is to highlight Rufus' son and to portray the father as a loyal client of the consular Cornelius Tacitus, of whom Pliny writes, *scis quem virum*.[16] The juxtaposition of *homo* and *vir* emphasizes the unequal status of Asinius Sr. and Tacitus. By terming the father *homo eximius, bonorum amantissimus*, Pliny not only indicates that Rufus is a loyal subordinate to the *boni*, if they still exist, but he also implies that the son, who is *ipso patre melior*, will surpass the father in public life (4.15.6).[17]

Whereas in Cicero's day *amantissimus rei publicae* had strong overtones of factional politics, representing the conservative element in the Senate,[18] in Pliny's brave new world, factionalism has been kept successfully in check (notwithstanding an occasional imperial homicide), and Trajan, despite the fact that he is addressed as *domine*, symbolizes *res publica*, the emperor ostensibly being nothing more than

Spurinna, *cos.* II (1.5.9): Verginius Rufus, *cos.* III, writer and historian (2.1.2-3; 6.10.1); Avidius Nigrinus, attorney (7.6.2); Pompeius Saturninus, literary *familiaris* (7.8.1); Titinius Capito, equestrian *litterarum iam senescentium reductor ac reformator* (8.12.1-2); Pompeius Quintianus, deceased *iuvenis* (9.9.2). *Summi viri*: Arulenus Rusticus, supporter of Helvidius Priscus (1.14.1); great orators and *summi viri* who exercise their minds (7.9.12).

[13] Sherwin-White notes that *egregius vir* blended over class lines, not yet being a title for the equestrian (*supra*, n. 1) 507. P. uses it of senators junior senators, and knights. Trebonius Rufus, a *duovir* from Vienna Narbonensis, *amicus* of P. (4.22.1); Cornutus Tertullius, *cos. desig.* (2.11.19); Fadius Rufinus, *eques Romanus* (9.23.4); Gabius Bassus, *praefectus orae Ponticae* (10.21.1).

[14] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 292.

[15] Cicero, *praetorii homines*: *Font.* 43; *Verr. a. pr.* 38; cf. *vir praetorius*, Plin., *Ep.* 5.4.1.

[16] Tacitus was consul suffect in 97 A.D., Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 745.

[17] P. is anticipating Fundanus' designation as consul, counting him among the *sapientes viri* who choose their political children as if they were their natural offspring (4.15.9).

[18] As long as it concurred with the orator (*supra*, p. 15).

that institution's *princeps*.[19] This is illustrated by Pliny's reference to Julius Ursus Servianus—one of the "props of the Trajanic regime"[20]—as *optimus vir tuique amantissimus* (10.2.1). The *optimus vir*, a logical extension of the *bonus* and the *boni*, has lingered on as a memento of the Republic, but its political overtones have been neutralized.

The nature of public scoundrels has also altered, although the verbal abuse to which they are subjected retains its old familiar sting. Invective that was once cast in the impudent faces of tribunes and intransigent magistrates is now hurled at unscrupulous courtroom adversaries and Verres' successors in extortion, the rapacious ex-governors of provinces. An example from the former category is M. Aquilius Regulus, a praetorian senator, who had become a leading attorney of the centumviral court, amassing a huge fortune in the process. Pliny characterizes Regulus as an "ambulance chaser" and legacy hound.[21] In an anecdote he dubs an *aurea fabula*, the unprincipled lawyer and former Neronian delator[22] has the temerity to pay a professional visit to Verania, the ailing wife of Galba's adopted son Piso, despite the fact that Regulus had been *inimicissimus* and *invisissimus* to her late husband (2.20.2). According to Pliny, the incident demonstrates the *impudentia hominis*, who took advantage of the old woman's weakened condition and tricked her into including him in her will (*Ib.*). Penultimate lucidity, however, is granted to Verania, and her death-rattle is a Ciceronian imprecation: *Hominem nequam, perfidum, ac plus etiam quam periurum* (2.20.5).

Another of Regulus' victims is Aurelia, an *ornata femina* with consular relatives (2.20.10). She has put on all her finery for the purpose of signing her will. Regulus not only admires her costly attire, but he also covets the very garments on her back—after she is dead, that is, and will no longer need them. Aurelia, who prefers to take them with her, at first thinks that the *homo* is joking (*Aurelia ludere hominem putabat*), but the indefatigable fortune hunter compels the *mulier* to write him into her will (2.20.11):

> Coegit mulierem aperire tabulas ac sibi tunicas quas erat induta legare; observavit scribentem, inspexit, an scripsisset.

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[19] M. Hammond, *The Transmission of the Powers of the Roman Emperor from the Death of Nero in A.D. 68 to that of Alexander Severus in A.D. 235* (Rome, 1956) 64.

[20] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 66.

[21] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 739.

[22] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.* Pliny employs *homo* pejoratively for another informer, Fabricius Veiento, whom he depicts sprawling across the Emperor Nerva's lap, and remarks: *Dixi omnia cum hominem nominavi* (4.22.4).

In this preposterous tale, which Pliny dubs his third Regulus *fabula*, he has employed some familiar rhetorical tricks. Aurelia, like Verres' victims, is introduced as an *ornata femina* to demonstrate her respectability and wealth and to glean an amount of gratuitous sympathy. The episode, which is humorous, is apparently exaggerated in order to make Regulus, who displays a limited sense of humour (1.5), appear ridiculous.[23] *Homo* sums him up properly. *Coegit mulierem* contributes an aura of violence. One does not compel a *femina* to do anything, and *mulier* is an accustomed part of the vocabulary pertaining to the victim.[24] Regulus horror stories are a recurrent feature of the correspondence.[25] In another epistle, Pliny abhors the *hominis crudelitas*, and repeats a current calumny: "*Regulus [est] omnium bipedum nequissimus*!" which he believes to be a fair estimation of the man's character (1.5.13-14). Needless to say, the individual whom Pliny notes to be *in summa avaritia sumptuosus, in summa infamia gloriosus* (4.2.5) is always a *homo*, and never a *vir*. Very probably, since Regulus has sneered at Pliny for imitating Cicero (1.5.12), the latter-day orator has carefully lambasted the incorrigible pettifogger with typical Ciceronian vituperation.

As in Cicero's day, *homo* with pejorative adjectives is the accepted means of defaming witnesses for the opposition in the courtroom. Pliny was involved in several extortion cases during his judiciary career, which began at the age of eighteen.[26] In one, he represented the province of Baetica against the late, unlamented Caecilius Classicus, *homo foedus et aperte malus* who governed *non minus violenter quam sordide* (3.9.2). Charged with perjury in the same case was Norbanus Licinianus,[27] Classicus' *legatus et inquisitor*, whom Pliny envisions to be a second edition of his late superior: *homo alioqui flagitiosus et Domitiani temporibus usus* (3.9.31). Gender epithets play their part in keeping the protagonists straight in this complicated case; in the manner of black

[23] Sherwin-White takes Regulus stories seriously (*supra*, n. 1) 202-5.

[24] In Cicero and Livy, verbs denoting physical force, compulsion or harm, take *mulier* and *homo* in the accusative, as do verbs of penalty. *e.g. mulierem...necavit* (*Cluent.* 31); *mulierem veneno interfecit* (*Ib.*); *prima potione mulierem sustulit* (*Ib.* 40); *mulierem...rei capitalis esse damnatam* (*Ib.* 32); *hominem modestum...facile coercet* (*Verr.* 1.134); *hunc ego hominem... compulissem* (*Cat.* 3.17); *cum tot homines innocentes necarit* (*Verr.* 1.9); *securi esse percussos homines innocentes nobiles* (1.76) *Q. Metellus...oprimet hominem* (*Cat.* 2.26); *Hermippum hominem eruditum...percussit* (*Flacc.* 46); *consules spoliari hominem et virgas expediri iubent* (Liv. 2.55.5); *Poenus comprehendi hominem vinctumque attrahi ad sese iussit* (23.7.7-8); *Verginius arripi iubet hominem et in vincula duci* (3.13.4).

[25] 1.5; 2.11.22; 2.20; 4.2; 6.2.

[26] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 71.

[27] It is thought that the trial took place in 100 A.D., *Ibid.*, 60.

togas for the villains and white for the heroes, the defendants are *homines*, but the attorneys are *viri*. Pliny's colleague, Lucceius Albinus, is called *vir in dicendo copiosus, ornatus* (3.9.7); his participation in the case has drawn him closer to Pliny.[28] As 20th century courtroom courtesy prompts opposing attorneys to speak well of each other as "learned friends" and "worthy opponents", so, in the second century, did it prompt them to defer to each other as respected *viri*. For instance, the orator designates the attorney for the defense, Claudius Restitutus, *vir exercitatus et vigilans et quamlibet subitis paratus* (3.9.16). Such a description serves to highlight Pliny's victory, since it implies that he was even more cunning and shrewd. This verbal tactic is similar to the historiographical ploy that builds up barbarian generals to formidable proportions in order to glorify Roman victories and excuse Roman defeats.[29]

Mitigation of a near defeat probably lurks behind the epithet *vir paratus et vehemens*, used of the prosecutor, Pomponius Rufus (4.9.3). Except for a technicality, Pliny would have lost the case in the trial of Junius Bassus, who seems to have spent his entire career under a cumulonimbus cloud that periodically discharged its contents onto his person. Bassus, *homo laboriosus et adversis clarus* (4.9.1), was delated twice under Vespasian; he was also under constant suspicion by Titus because of *amicitia* with Domitian, who eventually reciprocated his loyalty by exiling him. Upon being recalled by Nerva, Bassus was allotted the province of Bithynia, but was slapped with a prosecution for extortion upon his return (4.9.1-4). Pliny explains that the *homo simplex et incautus* had accepted *munera* from the provincials; the prosecution, however, splitting hairs, interprets the gifts as *furta ac rapinae* (4.9.6) (Pliny adds that such fine distinctions are beside the point since provincial rewards and plunder are one in the myopic eyes of the law.). This letter, written in a light-hearted manner, demonstrates Pliny's dexterous handling of a thorny case in which he was fully aware of his client's guilt. *Homo* with mildly pejorative adjectives, allows Pliny to separate himself from the man's demonstrable culpability, and yet to discharge his obligations as attorney for the defense.

Although we are dealing with reported accounts of the trials and can only take Pliny's words as indicators of any epithets used at the bar, very likely, they approximate those demanded by courtroom etiquette. Furthermore, it is very likely that Regulus—always an odious *homo* in the

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[28] On a similar epithet for Hortensius, *v. infra*, p. 157, n. 49.

[29] *v. supra*, chapter six, pp. 105-106.

letters—as soon as he set foot into court, became a *vir eloquentissimus et copiosissimus*, as such formalized hypocrisy was taken for granted. Since the centumviral court was hearing legacy cases, Pliny did not have the compelling need to degrade his adversaries with *infamia* as did Cicero in his criminal trials.

Respected colleagues of the bar are *viri* by benefit of their membership in the club, no matter how flagrant the crimes of those on whom they are called to defend. Thus Fronto Catius, counsel for the rapacious ex-governor of Africa, Marius Priscus—alleged to have sullied his administration with blood-money—is acknowledged as a consummate juridical artist by the epithet *vir movendarum lacrimarum peritissimus* (2.11.3). In a feat of lachrymose prestidigitation, Catius has managed to have the charges reduced from murder to extortion, causing the consul designate, Julius Ferox, *vir rectus et sanctus*, to order the creation of a special *quaestio* (2.11.5). In the subsequent trial, Catius conjures *omnes artes suas* for the defense; his fellow-pleader, Marius Salvius Liberalis, *vir subtilis, dispositus, acer et disertus*, assists him ably. Cornelius Tacitus, leading for the prosecution, replies eloquently, after which Catius, in response, harangues the sun below the horizon in an apparent attempt to wear out the jury with his summation (2.11.17-18). Pliny, who considered *Pro Cluentio* Cicero's greatest speech (1.20.8), finds the marathon proceedings reminiscent of the good old days: *Iam hoc ipsum pulchrum, antiquum, senatum nocte dirimi, triduo vocari, triduo contineri*; and the case closes when one of the consuls designate, Cornutus Tertullus, *vir egregius et pro veritate firmissimus*, raps a HS. 700,000 fine on Priscus, banishing him from Italy (2.11.19). In the course of a judicial career, one was called on to defend all sorts; the guilt or innocence of the client was irrelevant, as long as one acted in a reasonably ethical manner.

Tuscilius Nominatus did not exercise professional ethics, and Pliny refers to him not as *vir exercitatus* as he did Claudius Restitutus (3.9.16), but as *homo in dicendo exercitatus* (5.13.3). Nominatus' services had been engaged by the townspeople of Vicetia who were complaining that a *vir praetorius*, one Sollers, who had made part of his estate available for a market-cum-carnival, had misappropriated his property (5.4.1). Apparently, Nominatus did not give satisfaction, for the Vicetians returned to court, minus their attorney, whom they were now suing for malpractice (5.4.2-4): the lawyer had charged not one but two fees. Nominatus' summation in his own behalf might be dubbed the "cold-feet defense" by modern students of jurisprudence: it was not his *fides*, but his *constantia* that failed; senatorial pressure, furthermore, had been

applied, and Nominatus had the distinct impression that he was to disist from blocking one of their own whose *dignitas* depended upon the *nundinae* (5.13.2-3). The craven attorney closes his oration by collapsing into maudlin supplications;[30] and Pliny comments (5.13.3):

> quin etiam tota actione homo in dicendo exercitatus operam dedit, ut deprecari magis (id enim et favorabilius et tutius) quam defendi videretur.

Homo conveys the revulsion that Pliny feels for a man who would succumb to the acceptance of fees for his services.[31]

Pliny and Martial: a Hole in the Hypothesis?

The term *homo ingeniosus acutus acer* has a very singular tone when Pliny applies it to the poet Martial, whose obituary occupies an entire letter (3.21.1). On the surface, the appellation might throw serious doubts upon the theories set forth in these pages, especially since the epistle expresses sympathy for the Spaniard, who had come to Rome and amassed enough wherewithal to be enrolled among the equestrians,[32] and who was considered an *amicus* of Pliny (3.21.2). Martial's Spanish birth is of no consequence to the discussion since everybody who was anybody in the early second century came from Spain anyway. One must cast into deeper waters, as P. White has done, in order to determine the exact nature of Pliny's relationship to the poet.[33] The problem rests, in part, with historical hindsight, founded, according to White, in modern conceptions of literary patronage which becloud the situation as it truly existed in the Roman Empire.[34] He furthermore emphasizes the unequal nature of *amicitia*.[35] Relying upon internal evidence from the poetry of Martial and Juvenal, as well as on information furnished by Pliny's epistles, White has concluded that far from being in a position of social equality, supported by philanthropic beneficence, Roman poets adhered

[30] Illustrating the difference between proper and improper use of *lacrimae*— it was acceptable to weep for one's client, but not for oneself.

[31] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 70. Pontificating from the lofty pulpit of the rich, Pliny expounds:

> Quam me iuvat, quod in causis agendis non modo pactione dono munere verum etiam xeniis semper abstinui! Oportet quidem, quae sunt inhonesta, non quasi inlicita, sed quasi pudenda, vitare (5.13.8).

[32] P. Howell, *A Commentary on Book One of the Epigrams of Martial* (London, 1980) 1.

[33] P. White, "*Amicitia* and the profession of poetry in early imperial Rome," *JRS* 68 (1978) 74-92.

[34] *Ibid.* 79.

[35] *Ibid.*, 80; B.K. Gold notes that poets were often part of the aristocratic household and treated like other domestic retainers, *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome* (Chapel Hill and London, 1987) 40-41.

to the fringes of the domestic entourage of the Great Man whose *domus*, but not his purse, was open.[36] The generous entrepreneur, envisioned by Sherwin-White, who mingled liberally on the same social footing with his learned inferiors,[37] is the man-who-never-was. The chief function of the literary patron was to provide a platform[38] and lots of free publicity.[39] White notes that Martial's agenda was always crammed with myriad activities that involved scurrying after his various patrons with their numerous clients in order to make the customary display in the forum or at court.[40] The poet, in short, was a literary limpet clinging to the rock of patronage along with all the other sponges and barnacles that included "astrologers, parasites, fortune-hunters [and] social climbers."[41]

White remarks upon the "peculiar tone" of the letter in which "one would scarcely recognize...that Martial was a celebrity at all."[42] He further observes that this was not a lapse due to overwhelming emotion, since the letter was meticulously calculated *ex post facto* down to the last epigrammatic clausula, and penned from a deliberate viewpoint.[43] Pliny's emphasis, he continues, is not on Martial, the eminent poet, but on himself, the charitable provider of the boat-ticket that allowed Martial to go back to Spain and retire. As White puts it:[44]

> We do not perceive Martial as a prominent public figure, because he is being described as another individual gathered into the web of personal services and obligations. The public figure presented to us in fact is not Martial but Pliny. The letter is so framed as to disclose the courteous attention shown to a promising senator and the magnanimous friendship which ensued.

The epithet *homo ingeniosus acutus acer* contributes to the situation that White describes. It is condescending praise, and perhaps understandable when one considers that Martial's poem, quoted by Pliny, was penned during the latter's years as a junior senator; it is an effort that has been

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[36] Other than an occasional bequest, White (*supra*, n. 33) 83. Gold cites innate Roman embarassment over payment for services rendered (*supra*, n. 35) 65.

[37] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 759.

[38] Such as Rome's band-box auditorium of Maecenas, a small semi-circle of seats, above which are frescoes of birds and trees by the artist of Livia's villa at Prima Porta; it is in the form of an antro-nymphaeum, where one could have poetry readings in an ambience of ferns and fountains. *Roma Capitale*, 1870-1911: *L'archeologia in Roma Capitale tra sterro e scavo* (Venice, 1983) 225-47.

[39] White (*supra*, n. 33) 85.

[40] *Ibid.*, 74-77; Gold remarks that "clients and parasites" constantly cadged invitations (*supra*, n. 35) 182, n. 18.

[41] White (*supra*, n. 33) 76.

[42] *Ibid.*, 83.

[43] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

[44] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

evaluated as standard fare for the second-rate figures of Roman society.[45] Although ostensibly praising them, Pliny dismisses Martial's lines as *versiculi*, and takes it for granted that Cornelius Priscus, a consular, may not only be unfamiliar with the stanzas, but that he also may not have read anything else of Martial's either (3.21.4):

> Quaeris, qui sint versiculi quibus gratiam rettuli? Remitterem te ad ipsum volumen, nisi quosdam tenerem; tu, si placuerint hi, ceteros in libro requires.

The poem itself provides additional clues as it compares Pliny to the sainted orator from Arpinum. The charge, "*cum Cicerone aemulatio*", was a sore point with Pliny, who had been taunted with being a Cicero-clone by the spiteful Regulus between sessions of court (1.5.11-12). The amount of space Pliny devotes to the petty squabble, even rationalizing his supposed imitation, demonstrates that the assertion rankled:

> *Regulus*: "Satrius Rufus, cui non est cum Cicerone aemulatio, et qui contentus est eloquentia saeculi nostri."*Pliny*: Respondi nunc me intellegere maligne dictum quia ipse confiteretur; ceterum potuisse honorificum existimari.
> "Est enim," inquam, "mihi cum Cicerone aemulatio, nec sum contentus eloquentia saeculi nostri. Nam stultissimum credo ad imitandum non optima quaeque proponere."

Regulus' snide remarks, perhaps intended to throw Pliny off his stride in the case at hand, imply that the orator was not only an imitator but also hopelessly old fashioned; besides which, it must have been galling for an attorney of considerable pride to be constantly compared to one whose reputation loomed so high that there was no hope to surmount it.

Is there not, perhaps, an element of ingenious double-talk in Pliny's seemingly solicitous enquiry about Martial's poem? (3.21.6):

> Meritone eum qui haec de me scripsit et tunc dimisi amicissime et nunc ut amicissimum defunctum esse doleo?

A redolent disingenuousness lingers around Pliny's homiletic pronouncement: *Tametsi quid homini potest dari maius, quam gloria et laus et aeternitas*?[46] And his final scathing judgment condemns Martial's poetry to eternal mediocrity: *At non erunt aeterna quae scripsit: non erunt, fortasse, ille tamen scripsit, tamquam essent futura. Vale* (3.21.6).

It would be well to recall several points about the epithet, *homo*

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[45] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 263.

[46] The remark is reminiscent of contemporary American backstage "praise", uttered when one does not wish to commit oneself on the merits of the performance: "Darling, you'll *never* be better than you were tonight!"

ingeniosus acutus acer.[47] It will be remembered that Cicero employed the adjectives separately and sometimes in combination with *homo*, as part of his invective against tribunes of the plebs and other major ne'er-do-wells. *Acutus* has connotations of scheming for the main chance, and *acer* denotes keen ruthlessness.[48] *Ingeniosus*, on the other hand, denoted the clever speaker, the quibbler who dealt in covert innuendoes, as Cicero indicated in his remarks about the oration of C. Gracchus.[49] We have seen how Velleius Paterculus, echoing Cicero, used the epithet for tribunes who straddled the factional fence, hopping off on either side that suited their momentary purposes.[50] M. Valerius Martialis, literary parasite and scribbler of mordant epigrams that depended upon "verbal dexterity and versatility," was an abject sycophant of Domitian, who, after that emperor's assassination, added his voice to the "chorus of obloquy" and transferred his adulation first to Nerva and then to Trajan.[51]

Pliny, who himself rose to the top under Domitian and prospered in subsequent regimes, had limited patience with others who did so; he was ever-ready to criticise such turncoats. At the same time, a supposed eulogistic necrology was hardly the place to do so openly. Instead, he reduces the writer of what he seems to consider doggerel, who has pronounced him to be, in effect, a second-rate Cicero, to his proper insignificance. Pliny was a subtle man, who could not be "simple even in official correspondence."[52] By calling Martial *homo ingeniosius acutus acer*, Pliny has strung the poet up with the noose of that *ingeniosissimus* orator, M. Tullius Cicero.

The term *homo*, applied to a poet, would not have seemed that unusual in a society where the patron-client system was taken for granted. It was left to Cornelius Priscus to read between the lines for additional nuances. It is only historical retrospect that regards Martial as a celebrity—partly because his poems have survived—which presupposes that the poet occupied a position of pre-eminence and therefore social equality with Pliny and his circle. Since Pliny's gender epithets are so consistent with

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[47] *v. supra*, chapter one, p. 28; chapter six, p. 108.

[48] Cicero's description of the actions of Steanus, a bribed juror in *Pro Cluentio*, illustrates this quality (67):

> Tum ab Steiano, sicut ab homine ad excogitandum acutissimo, ad audendum impudentissimo, ad efficiendum acerrimo—haec enim ille et aliqua ex parte habebat et maiore ex parte se habere simulabat— auxilium capiti ac fortunis suis petere coepit.

[49] *v. supra*, chapter six, p. 108. *H. ingeniosissimus et copiosissimus* may have been Cicero's way of saying that Hortensius, as prosecuting attorney, was a double-talking windbag (*Muren.* 48).

[50] *v. supra*, chapter six, p. 108.

[51] Howell (*supra*, n. 32) 3.

[52] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 6.

those of his predecessors, especially historians versed in rhetoric, it would be unreasonable to assume that a hackneyed pejorative expression, such as *homo ingeniosissimus acutus acer*, has suddenly sprouted wings of cherubic innocence. Pliny is expressing himself in a manner every bit as subtle, sharp and biting as Martial ever did.

Liberti, Privati, *and Other Human Beings*

In Pliny's other letters, *homo* retains its customary nuances. It remains the accepted term for retainers of inferior social station, such as freedmen. Pliny exhorts one Sabinianus to take back his wayward ex-slave, reminding him: "*Amasti hominem*!" (9.21.2); and shades of Cicero's Dionysius hover over the dying *libertus* Zosimus.[53] Pliny describes him as *homo probus, officiosus, litteratus* (5.19.3). A skilled comic and lyre-player, Zosimus also excelled in history, oratory and poetry. The word *homo* in this context does not negate Pliny's genuine affection for Zosimus; it merely reflects the realities of the unequal patron-client relationship. Freedmen may have come into their own since the days of Cicero, but no matter how rich, powerful, or educated they had become, they were still regarded as second-class citizens.[54]

Vir in Cicero's prose signified persons who participated actively in public life; conversely, *homo* sometimes referred to the *privatus*, in which case it held no pejorative associations.[55] Pliny also had occasion to allude to *homines privati*. An example is the great Verginius Rufus, who had quelled the Vindex rebellion, eventually attaining his third consulship only to take a fatal tumble on the marble floor of the Senate (2.1.1-3).[56] Pliny regarded Verginius as the foremost *vir* of his age, and the orator notes that the old consular preferred the *fastigium hominis privati* although he could have been emperor.

In a similar vein, Pliny recalls the *homo felicior* who once owned Calpurnius Macer's country house and lived there before he entered public life. Pliny remarks on the pleasures of rural life that Macer will enjoy as a *privatus*: his wife and son, hunting and fishing (5.18). The *homo privatus* has the leisure to pursue the gentle pastime of creative writing, and Pliny cites several *doctissimi, gravissimi, sanctissimi homines* who scribbled light verse (5.3.3). Leisure to write poetry is a recurrent

[53] *v. supra*, chapter one, pp. 17-18.
[54] A.M. Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1928) 58.
[55] *v. supra*, chapter one, p. 11.
[56] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 761.

theme for Pliny who, upon one occasion, enquires sardonically: "So you want to know how a *homo...severus* like myself took up poetry?" (7.4.1). There may have been pensive envy behind such thoughts from the busy magistrate who was to die in office in far-off Bithynia.[57]

It is important to remember that the primary meaning of *homo* is "human being", and as such, the word is neutral.[58] Thus one may cite a *vir*, and yet in the next sentence, in reference to the same man, relate to the virtues of the *homo*—virtues being qualities that pertain to human beings. Thus Pliny can praise the high-ranking Corellius as *sapientissimus vir* (4.17.9) and *providentissimus vir* (4.17.10), and yet write of the *dignitas hominis* (4.17.3). Similarly, he can recommend Julius Genitor as tutor for Corellia's son, calling him *vir...emendatus et gravis*, and at the same time, note the *caritas hominis* (3.3.5). In its sense of human being, *homo* may actually be a term of affection, as when G. Fannius, a fellow lawyer and biographer of Nero's victims, dies: Pliny writes that he loved the *hominem elegantem disertum* (5.5.1).

Human beings presuppose human failings as well as virtues, and Pliny, commenting upon his own love of a good laugh and his penchant for penning salacious verse, quotes Terence's *Chremes*: "*Homo sum*!"[59] Perhaps it is the human element that renders *homo* prone to use with pejoratives: a *vir* should rise above human foibles.

The Blue-Bloodless and the Red-Blooded Society Femina

It remains to subject the women in Pliny's letters to scrutiny. Without exception, both the several recipients of his epistles and those of whom he writes are women of rank;[60] and Adams notes Pliny's repeated employment of *femina* with adjectives connoting aristocratic status.[61] Two examples of aristocratic integrity are Arria, the widow of symbolic "Republicanism", Thrasea Paetus, and her daughter, Fannia, relict of the elder Helvidius Priscus, a second emblem of *libertas*.[62] She and Arria are noted to be *optimae feminae* (9.13.16), an expression which, in light of their dead husbands' political stance, is fraught with Ciceronian over-

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[57] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 81.
[58] H.D. Jocelyn, "*Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto*," *Antichthon* 6 (1972) 33.
[59] 5.3.2; *Ibid.*, 14-16.
[60] Two *feminae*, we have already met: the *uxor* of Piso, and the *ornata f.*, Aurelia. v. supra, p. 150.
[61] J.N. Adams, "Latin words for 'woman' and 'wife'," *Glotta* 50 (1972) 235.
[62] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n.1) 243. cf. Tac. *Ann.* 16.34.

tones.[63] When Fannia is about to succumb to tuberculosis,[64] contracted while tirelessly nursing a kinswoman, the Vestal Junia, Pliny laments that so great a *femina* will be lost to the world (7.19.4). It is perhaps her designation as a *matrona* and *femina maxima*, the paragon of *castitas*, *sanctitas*, *gravitas*, *constantia*, and related virtues that prompts Sherwin-White to deplore her and her mother as a "tedious pair" and nonpareils of "tiresome obstinacy", who relentlessly hound Publicius Certus, against whom they hold a grudge for having informed upon their husbands.[65] Pliny certainly feels genuine love and admiration for them; it is the expression of that affection, however, in what have become trite laudatory terms, that disturbs the credibility of the reader, creating a saccharine "too-good-to-be-true" aura. Pliny's cloying portrait of Arria and Fannia is reminiscent of Livy's sugar-coated replicas of Cloelia and Verginia, prototypes that were lampooned by Apuleius in his one-dimensional confection of Plotina (*v. infra*, chapter ten, n. 54).

A far more human representative of the sex is Ummidia Quadratilla, who lived until the age of 79. The daughter of the Neronian consular and mother of Pliny's protégé,[66] she is termed *princeps femina* and is noted to have harboured in her villa a troupe of mimes, whose ribald performances whiled away the hours of *otium* that she acknowledged to be inherent in the life of the *femina* (7.24.4-5). Ummidia's statement clearly pertains to the aristocratic *matrona*. The author has applied *femina* in its pristine aristocratic sense; it is totally cleansed of the sugary moral accretions that cleave to the word as it is employed of Arria and Fannia. As a result, Ummidia towers above the improbably valiant duo on human terms; her portrait reveals a visceral red-blooded matron with a delicious sense of the vulgar, whose company of mummers with their laughter-provoking antics has brightened her otherwise dreary old age.

Tacitus and the Feminae *of Misenum (6.20.14).*

One can only speculate on Pliny's choice of words when he tells of the terrified shrieking *feminae* of Misenum fleeing Vesuvius' ardent shower of pumice and flying debris, so thick that it had blotted out the sun's light: *audires ululatus feminarum, infantum quiritatus, clamores virorum.* Does this passage indicate that *femina* is supplanting *mulier* and "losing its tone of respect," occurring "as a neutral equivalent of *mulier* in the

[63] *v. supra*, chapter one, p. 11.
[64] Dr. Sherwin-White's diagnosis (*supra*, n. 1) 351; 424.
[65] *Ibid.*, 243.
[66] *Ibid.*, 762.

educated language," as Adams postulates?[67] Or is Pliny's oratorical training at work again?

The author's choice of words may perhaps be predicated upon the fact that his addressee is Cornelius Tacitus. Pliny is essaying to convey an eye-witness account of a cataclysmic natural disaster that not only convulsed the area around the bay of Naples, but also altered its topography beyond recognition. He is presenting the episode in as straightforward a manner as possible. His choice of *femina* over the general *mulier* may well reflect rhetorical and historiographical trends which have turned the howling *mulier* into a maenad.[68] *Agmina* of weeping *mulieres* had been a *topos* since Julius Caesar wrote them into his commentaries to emphasize the despair of the defeated (*B.G.* 1.51); and Tacitus, himself, was to incorporate them similarly into the *Agricola* (38.1) and the *Annales* (1.40).[69] When writing an eminent historian, Pliny would be particularly careful to employ the *mot juste*. Therefore, when given the choice between the maudlin *mulier* and the frantic *femina*, Pliny opts for the latter. *Mulieres* in tears have too many negative historiographical associations, while *feminae*, petrified, clutching their helpless infants to their breasts, will evoke maximum empathy. Pliny's anomalous use of *femina* may therefore stem from the author's desire to avoid what had become an historiographical cliche.[70]

Otherwise the orator's gender terminology falls into well-worn patterns: *vir* and *femina* refer to the socially relevant and to public figures; *homo*, when it is not being used as a component of invective, indicates

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[67] Adams (*supra*, n. 61). 238.

[68] *v. supra*, chapter five, p. 91. Notable among Livy's sobbing and disorderly *mulierum agmina* are the *mulieres* of Uscana (Liv. 43.10.5):

> et ad clamorem erumpentium ingens strepitus e muris ortus ululantium mulierum cum crepitu undique aere.

[69] An *exemplum* of the wailing woman is Antistia Pollitta: *dolore atrox*, drenched in her father's blood, she plants herself in front of the palace door and assaults Nero: *modo* muliebri eiulatu, aliquando sexum egressa voce infensa *clamitabat* (Tac. *Ann.* 16.10). On the positive image of the shrieking *femina*, *v. supra*, chapter seven, p. 128.

[70] Pliny employs *mulier* only three times in his letters. One example has been discussed (*supra*, p. 151). In the second, *m.* denotes "woman" in the biological sense. The situation concerns a story in which Curtius Rufus has a phantasmal vision: *mulieris figura humana grandior pulchriorque* (7.27.2). The spectre predicts that the terrified Rufus will someday be governor of Africa. The third, in a letter about the outcome of an inheritance case, P. writes of a *mulier natalibus clara*, a widow with children, who incurred disapproval by marrying a senescent invalid, thereby becoming a suspected legacy hunter. Her devoted care to the patient, however, redeems her reputation. Pliny has not identified the woman other than *uxor* of Domitius Tullus, so *mulier* could be the general term to indicate an unnamed woman. On the other hand, *mulier* could represent Pliny's subconscious disapprobation for a match he terms *parum decore* (8.18.8); Seneca uses *mulier* as a term of abuse when he tells how Julia ruined Iullus Antonius: *et iterum timenda cum Antonio mulier* (*Brv.* 4.6.4).

the undistinguished, the servile orders, and persons who have retired from public life. *Vir* and *femina* predominate his gender vocabulary because Pliny's orbit revolved closely around the imperial sun. Although his correspondence is directed to men of all ranks, from consulars to otherwise unknown equestrians and *privati*,[71] reference to the greats, employing aristocratic terms, in letters to persons of lesser stature, was a way of putting the recipients at ease, flattering them that they too were included in the circle.

Except for recommendations and official correspondence, the missives act as an epistolary society column; their subjects often deal with the "beautiful people", marking their transition in the Roman scene. Many contain juicy items, giving readers the inside story on what, for example, Ummidia Quadratilla was "really like." Occasionally, a "nobody" enters into the report; but inclusion of the freedman Zosimus—although reflective of Pliny's concern and affection—can only call attention to the consular posing squarely at center stage, bathed in the rose-tinted arclight of charity: the caring patron with the welfare of his clients at heart.[72] *Viri* and *feminae* predominate the letters because, other than taking a vicarious delight in seeing the Reguluses of the world punctured by Ciceronian vituperation, Pliny's gentle readers cared not a whit about *homines* and *mulieres*, the silent majority of the Roman world.

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[71] Sherwin-White (*supra*, n. 1) 65-67.

[72] *v. supra*, 145.

CHAPTER NINE

SUETONIUS: CICERONIAN SHORTHAND

Literary activity flourished in the post-Flavian era; and although the *otium* of the *homo privatus* may have been conducive to the pastime of creative writing, Suetonius Tranquillus and his prolific literary friends, Pliny the Younger and Cornelius Tacitus, all combined writing with active careers in public life.[1]

Like Pliny and Tacitus, Suetonius was skilled in rhetoric, and oratorical dexterity is evident in his works. Even the most casual perusal, however, demonstrates profound differences in his literary approach from that of his contemporaries. Suetonius' style has been termed "mundane" and "artless."[2] Operating within a biographical framework in *De Vita Caesarum*, Suetonius is a reporter of "facts" (sometimes contradictory); he makes no attempt to delve into "behind-the-scenes" motivation, as does Tacitus in his role of "omniscient" historian.[3] The differences are evident in Suetonius' gender terms, which reflect his training in neo-Ciceronian rhetoric.[4]

In the biographies of the Caesars, each "Life" is divided into set rubrics that center upon the virtues and vices of the individual emperors.[5] Consequently, almost all of the characters, except for the imperial protagonists, are ancillary to the narrative. Some of them, in fact, appear within the space of one sentence and vanish with the onset of the next. Suetonius, like Velleius, used gender epithets as a shorthand to establish social position or to emphasize moral characteristics in as few words as possible. Suetonius employs such expressions for individual characters more frequently in the first half-dozen books, very probably because he invested more of his literary energies and utilized more words in the

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[1] Suetonius' equestrian career and his prolific literary output are recounted by A. Wallace-Hadrill in *Suetonius* (Old Woking, 1983) 2-8; 38-49; R. Martin reviews Tacitus' career and writings in the second chapter of *Tacitus* (London, 1981) 26-38.

[2] Wallace-Hadrill (*supra*, n. 1) 19.

[3] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*; cf. Martin (*supra*, n. 1) 215. R.C. Lounsbury notes that Suetonius "did not seek to impose his ethos on his material after the appreciable fashion of Tacitus," *The Arts of Suetonius* (New York, 1987) 102.

[4] Wallace-Hadrill notes that Suetonius attended lectures at Rome during the time that Quintilian held the chair of rhetoric (*supra*, n. 1) 3; on Quintilian and the tradition of Cicero, G. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Ancient World* (Princeton, 1972) 523.

[5] Wallace-Hadrill (*supra*, n. 1) chapter seven, "Virtues and Vices," 145 sq.

early *Lives* than he did in the later.[6] The biographer's gender terminology is notably devoid of innovation: it falls into the familiar patterns used with variations, according to genre, by Cicero, Livy, and Pliny.[7]

The Lower Classes, Foreigners, and Pejorative Gender Terms

Context, according to I. Opelt, determines whether a word is pejorative or not,[8] and this observation applies to *homo* and *mulier* when the words are used to indicate members of the lower orders and foreigners. For instance, the following example from the life of Augustus demonstrates that rank (or lack of it) is the determining factor in the author's choice of words. Before Actium, Octavian meets a *homo* named Eutychus, an *asinarius* by profession, who owns a donkey called Nicon. The not-yet-Augustus, demonstrating the gambler's faith that seems to have run in his family,[9] interprets the encounter as a hunch of success, since the two are so fortunately named (*Aug.* 96.2). The term *homo* is based purely upon Eutychus' profession, since *viri* do not engage in such vulgar occupations. *Homo* is therefore devoid of pejorative moral overtones.

Suetonius is said to display the usual aristocratic disdain for the lower orders, though he does not employ the scathing epithets to *plebs* that Tacitus does.[10] Suetonius, however, will attach *homo* to *plebs* or *plebeius* in instances where the persons in question are definitely acting in an unacceptable manner. An example is the anonymous *e plebe homo*, caught near the bed of the Emperor Claudius with a drawn daggar (*Cl.* 13.1). The specification of the culprit as such places responsibility for

[6] B. Baldwin, *Suetonius* (Amsterdam, 1983) 484. The question whether Suetonius has created his own gender terms or has picked them up from his sources is probably unanswerable. Nevertheless, the biographer has chosen to employ them to emphasize a character's social rank or moral status. Baldwin notes that an author's sources influence his choice of words either "consciously or unconsciously." *Ibid.* 485.

[7] S.'s gender terms fall into the usual categories: *h.* and *m.* are used for the lower classes, foreigners, and sometimes as pejoratives, while *v.* and *f.* are employed exclusively for the upper echelons of society.

[8] I. Opelt, *Die lateinischen Schimpfwoerter und verwandte sprachliche Erscheinungen; eine Typologie* (Heidelberg, 1965) 265.

[9] The Emperor Claudius was an unabashed dice player (*Cl.* 5; 33.2; 39). One deduces his mania by the fact that he not only published a book on the theory of the game, but invented the first portable dice board to be used while travelling. The author of *Apocolocyntosis*, incidentally, uses Ciceronian pejoratives, addressing him as *homo crudelissime* (13), and dispatches him to the underworld with a "holey" dice board (14). Also of interest is the fact that Claudius had the Senate award the name *Claudia Pia Fidelis* to the seventh and eleventh legions who had remained loyal during the revolt of Camillus (Dio. 60.16). Those numbers are lucky in the modern game; there may be some connection!

[10] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 6) 341-42.

the attempt upon the lower classes. The author's addition of *e plebe homines* to the names of Iunius Novatus and Cassius Patavinus, banished for having scurrilously slandered Augustus, serves a similar purpose (*Aug.* 51.1). "*E plebe homines*" stresses the fact that the perpetrators of the outrages were not "top drawer".

Although Suetonius has resisted the temptation to brand P. Clodius with the usual *homo*-plus-pejoratives, he has gratuitously attached *homo* to *plebeius* to indicate the tribune's adoptive father, compressing Clodius' ulterior motives into one relative clause:

> qui ob expellendum urbe Ciceronem plebeio homini atque etiam natu minori in adoptionem se dedit (*Tib.* 2.4).

Plebeius homo not only demonstrates the downward step in social status that the once-patrician Clodius has taken, but it also conveys the impression that any plebeian who would have the bad judgment to adopt P. Clodius and thereby facilitate his nefarious schemes must be equally censurable.[11]

Social status and negative moral judgment overlap in the statement that the reputation of future Emperor Claudius suffered because of the prodigality of his youth, misspent in tippling and gambling *ex contubernio sordidissimorum hominum* (*Cl.* 5). *Homo*, it will be recalled, is the customary gender term for *libertus*. Although Suetonius' treatment of freedmen is said to be relatively fair, the biographer, nevertheless, "utters the usual canards" about Narcissus, Pallas and the other *liberti* in Claudius' service.[12] When one considers Claudius' subsequent career and his elevation of freedmen in the State bureaucracy, *sordidissimi homines*, to the post-Flavian reader, will suggest the ex-slaves whom Claudius made into millionaires. The term will furthermore imply that the Emperor's future actions were predicated upon exposure at an early age to such socially dubious companions.

Suetonius takes less interest in freedwomen.[13] Among those he does mention is an anonymous *mulier libertina* to whom the Emperor Gaius paid HS. 800,000 for not revealing the guilt of her patron, even though

[11] Note that where Cicero may have inveighed against individual members of the plebs as *homines populares, nefarii*, etc., he was very careful not to insult the class itself, on whose votes he counted. Although he used the adjective *plebeius* on occasion, he refrained from applying it to *homo*, a noun so often pejorative in his vocabulary. H. Merguet, *Lexikon zu den Reden des Cicero* (Jena, 1882) s.v. *plebeius*.

[12] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 6) 344. On Cicero's use of *homo sordidus* as a term of abuse, *v. infra*, n. 25.

[13] Baldwin cites the following references: *Aug.* 65.2; *Cal.* 16.4; *Cl.* 40.2; *Ner.* 28.2; *Oth.* 2.2; *Vit.* 2.4; *Vesp.* 3 (*supra*, n. 6) 344.

she was subjected to the most severe torture (*Cal.* 16.4). Although she has been characterized as an "Epicharis with a happy ending,"[14] as far as development of character is concerned, there is absolutely no resemblance between the two women. Tacitus develops Epicharis' personality, where Suetonius has no other interest in his freedwoman, except to hint that Gaius' motives were suspect in the first place: *Quoque magis nullius non boni exempli fautor videretur* (*Ib.*).

One wonders why Suetonius found it necessary to specify the woman as a *mulier libertina* when *libertina* or *liberta* would have done just as well.[15] Suetonius' words of doubt on Gaius' intentions cause one to wonder whether *mulier* has not been gratuitously added to *libertina* in order to contribute a pejorative tone to the episode: the woman may well be yet another example of Caligula's outrageous extravagance, upon which the biographer elaborates in chapter thirty-seven.[16]

One holds similar reservations about the slave Telephus, whom the author lumps among *homines* of the lowest sort who conspired against the life of Augustus (*Aug.* 19.1).[17] It is not Telephus' designation as *homo* that causes concern, but his specification as a *mulieris servus nomenculator* who, under the delusion that he is destined to rule, aspires to *dominatio* (19.2).

On the one hand, *mulieris servus* (i.e., *Gaiae servus*) is a technical term; it therefore ought not to be pressed too hard.[18] Suetonius, who has enumerated various conspiracies, beginning with the upper classes and working his way down via a hybrid Parthian to Telephus, may have used *mulieris servus* to demonstrate just how far down the social ladder these plots extended. A *mulieris servus* was the lowest of the low. The secondary status of a female slaveowner (unless a member of the imperial family) is evident from the fact that only her sex and not her

[14] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 6) 346.

[15] *Mulier*, it will be recalled, is often coupled with *libertina* (e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 15.57.12) as *homo* is with *libertus* (e.g. Cic. *Cat.* 3.14). Cicero employs *liberta* alone (*Div. Caec.* 55); also *libertina* (*Sest.* 110). He couples *libertus* with *h.* when making a negative point: e.g., Verres makes brazen demands for assistance upon *homines inferiores*, *homines rusticanos*, and *libertinos homines*: 1.127; cf. *Verr.* 1.124; *Phil.* 2.3; *Cat.* 3.14; 4.16; *Balb.* 28; 56; *Scaur.* 11; *Sex. Rosc.* 19.

[16] Suetonius notes that Caligula squandered the incredible sum of HS. 2,700,000,000 of Tiberius' legacy in less than a single year (*Cal.* 37.3).

[17] Baldwin writes that Suetonius has little to say about slaves (*supra*, n. 6) 343.

[18] A.M. Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1928) 51. Although one finds no *mulierum servi* in *CIL 6*, there are, however, *mulierum liberti*, ## 19083; 27209; *v. infra*, n. 19.

name was used in her slave's nomenclature.[19] In this sense, Telephus is a second-rate slave of a second-class slaveowner.

On the other hand, *mulieris servus* could reflect innuendo: a *mulieris servus*, conspiring against the life of Augustus, in hopes of *dominatio*, is tantalizing in consideration of Tacitus' dark hints of plots emanating from Livia, whom he casts as a *dominatrix*, as far as the imperial succession is concerned.[20] Suetonius could have termed Telephus simply a *servus*, or even a *nomenculator*, that profession being synonymous with the servile orders.[21] The combination of *mulieris servus nomenculator* suggests that Telephus was under the thumb of his mistress; furthermore, as *nomenculator* he was in a position to observe the comings and goings of all and would therefore be in an ideal situation to foment a plot.[22] Considering the nature of Suetonius' subject, imperial conspiracies, *mulieris servus*, can only intensify Telephus' unreliability and suspicious nature.

As with the lower orders, context determines whether *homo* or *mulier*, when used of foreigners, is pejorative or not. Suetonius, like most Romans of his class, was ethnically prejudiced.[23] He displays his bias upon various occasions.[24] Foreigners commit socially unacceptable acts. For instance, the Emperor Nero decides that he must eliminate *quidquid in urbe hominum Gallicanorum esset* lest they be plotting against him (*Ner.* 43.1). Suetonius also records the prediction that Vitellius would fall at the hands *Gallicani hominis* (*Vi.* 18). There is only one foreign woman designated specifically by gender: a *Chatta mulier.* Suetonius hints that her vaticinations may have prompted Vitellius' to murder his

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[19] Duff (*supra*, n. 18) 52; cf. H. Thylander, *Étude sur l'Épigraphie Latine* (Lund, 1952) 62-63; e.g. *CIL* 6,19083: P. GRANIUS/ FELIX/ MINOR/ Ͻ.Ͻ. MULIERUM [sic]/LIBERT/ GRANIA. IARINE/CONLIBERTO/SUO/MERENTISSIM; 27209: M.TERENTI/MULIERIS LIBERTI/ RESTITUTI VIXIT/ ANNOS VIGINT UNUM; 11182: AESIAϽ.L ARECUSA; But, 4352: PRIMA AUGUSTI/ ET AUGUSTAE L/ NUTRIX IULIAE GERMA/NICI FILIAE.

[20] Tac. *Ann.* 1.4.17, *serviendumfeminae.* If the nation is a slave to Livia, she is a *domina.* As for the innuendo of murder: *Haec atque talia agitantibus gravescere valetudo Augusti et quidam scelus uxoris suspectabant* (*Ann.* 1.5).

[21] e.g. ZOSIMIANUS/ AUG. LIBERT. NOMENCLATOR, *CIL* 6.8940; M. AURELIUS AFRODISIUS AUG. LIB/ NOMENCLATOR, 8931; C. EGNATIUS C.L. EURIPUS/ NOMENCLATOR/ ATTIAE C.L. HERMIONE, 9689; a related job was the *Praeco*, as in A. GRANIUS M.L. STABILIO/ PRAECO, 32311.

[22] If this attributes too much subtlety to the artless Suetonius, consider that Livia actually had manumitted a TELEPHUS, LIVIAE L., whose tombstone for his sisters may be seen at the Capitoline Museum, left of the main door leading into the room of the centaurs (*CIL* 6.4193). S's words may reflect a prevalent rumour, or at least, a common source behind Tacitus' insinuations of Livia's murderous plots.

[23] Baldwin (*supra*, n. 6) 354.

[24] e.g., *Aug.* 40.3.

own mother (*Vi.* 14.5). *Homo* and *mulier* cannot help but add to the pejorative depiction of these persons: they are anonymous, foreign, and engaging in activities that will only contribute to civil strife.

That foreigners came in for a large share of suspicion is indicated by the biographer's observation that the Emperor Claudius issued an edict forbidding *peregrinae condicionis homines* from taking Roman *gens* names (*Cl.* 25.3).

With its servile-foreign associations, the term *homines* when applied to *Christiani* (*Ner.* 16.2) dissociates the practioners of that new and malefic superstition from members of the aristocracy and neatly categorizes them as base non-Romans.

Like Cicero, Suetonius used *homo* and *mulier* to degrade members of the aristocracy. The biographer employs this device for Nero's mother, Agrippina, and the Emperor Vitellius. In the first instance, Suetonius enhances his salacious allegations of incest with *mulier*-plus-pejorative adjectives, noting that there was not a soul who disbelieved that Nero not only courted sexual satisfaction with his mother, but that the *ferox atque impotens mulier* actually took advantage of the situation in order to exert her power over him (*Ner.* 28.2). Juxtaposition of ideas suggests that abnormal thirst for power and incest, a natural condition in the *ferox* world of beasts, go hand in hand.

Vitellius the glutton is succinctly portrayed by the epithet *homo non profundae modo sed intempestivae quoque ac sordidae gulae* (*Vit.* 13.3). The expression prepares the reader for Vitellius' stealing and gobbling the very oblations from the altars of the gods, thereby making a mockery of his sacred post as *pontifex maximus*. Gluttony is an attribute of beasts, and Vitellius—a disgrace to his consular ancestors and his mother, a *probatissima nec ignobilis femina* (*Vi.* 3.1)—is appropriately dragged to his death on a hook, like an obscene side of meat (*Vi.* 17.2).

Both Agrippina and Vitellius have violated the standards of behaviour expected of a *femina* and *vir* of the Roman aristocracy.[25] Besides incest, Agrippina is an adept in poisoning (*Cl.* 44; *Ner.* 34.2), which, as

[25] The animalistic connotations of *ferox* are self-evident. *Impotens* also holds such connotations when Cicero uses it of Antony (*Phil.* 5.42; cf. 5.22; 11.16), or in the context of *inhumanitas* (*Deiot.* 32). Vitellius' epithet recalls Cicero's *intempestus*, of dire connotations, used with *nox* as an appropriate time for slave uprisings (*Verr.* 4.94; 5.186), pirate attacks (*Ib.* 5.92) and the unfolding of villainous plots (*Phil.* 1.8; *Pis.* 93). C. uses *sordidus* repeatedly with *homo* in contexts of baseness and penury: *Cluent.* 87; *Flacc.* 52; *Vat.* 10; *Scaur.* 23. It is unlikely that such adjectives would be used with *femina* or *vir*. *Mulier* and *homo*, as Suetonius uses them of Agrippina and Vitellius, are therefore terms of abuse.

every Roman knows, is part and parcel of *peregrina superstitio*.[26] Vitellius not only frequents wayside cookshops, the haunts of the lower orders, but he may also be a matricide because of a foreign woman's cultic ravings (*Vi.* 14.5).[27] Clearly, the respective nouns *mulier* and *homo* are intended to degrade the aristocratic Agrippina and Vitellius, whose actions have not lived up to the moral obligations expected of a member of their order, but have been worthy of the meanest slave, fanatic barbarian, or slavering beast.[28]

Viri *and* Feminae: *a Touch of Class*

As Suetonius couples pejorative modifiers with *homo* and *mulier*, so he repeatedly joins the laudatory adjectives *consularis, inlustris, nobilis* and *princeps* to *vir* and *femina* for persons of rank. For instance, the biographer relates that the Emperor Claudius once characterized L. Otho as *vir quo meliores liberos habere ne opto quidem*; and Otho's wife, Alba Terentia, is designated *splendida femina* (*Oth.* 1.3).[29]

In other instances, one can deduce high rank, as in *triumphalis vir* (*Aug.* 30.1; *Ner.* 30.2); and even without Tacitus' identification of Lepida as Aemilia, the daughter-in-law of Augustus (*Ann.* 3.22-23), Suetonius' muddled account identifies the *generosissima femina* with the aristocracy, since he states that she had once been married to the *consularis* who was charging her with poisoning (*Tib.* 49.1).[30]

The moral obligations of aristocratic birth are evident when Tiberius warns Livia not to meddle in affairs unbecoming to a *femina* (*Tib.* 50.3). One can also assume that when Suetonius writes of Tiberius' crackdown

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[26] E. Massoneau, *La Magie dans l'Antiquité Romain* (Paris, 1934) 177 sqq., names several magic trials under Tiberius where many of the defendants are charged with a form of foreign superstition and/or poisoning/adultery. e.g., Aemilia Lepida: astrology, adultery, poison (Tac. *Ann.* 3.22); Claudia Pulchra: adultery, poisoning, enchantment and *impudicitia* (Tac. *Ann.* 4.52); Numantina: incantations, and poison (love philtres) (Tac. *Ann.* 4.22); R.S. Rogers, "A Tacitean Pattern in Treason Trials," *TAPA* 83 (1952) 279.

[27] At least, S. states that the emperor supplied his parent with a poison which he had no difficulty obtaining (*Vi.* 14.5).

[28] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1975) 126-39, discusses the connection between foreign superstition, astrology, magic and poisoning in the trials mentioned in Tacitus. On the adulteress/poisoner, *supra*, chapter two, n. 36.

[29] A.A. Howard, C.N. Jackson, *Index Verborum C. Suetonii Tranquili* (Cambridge, Mass., 1922) s.v. *vir consularis*; *inlustris*; *insignis*; *nobilis*; *praetorius*; *princeps*; *femina consularis*; *probatissima*.

[30] One may presume that when Caligula invited members of the senatorial and equestrian orders to a banquet, the gifts presented to *viri, feminae* and *pueri* were made to those of the invited orders (*Cal.* 17.2; cf. *Ve.* 19.1).

on the immorality of "both orders," that the *feminae famosae*, who had registered as prostitutes to evade the laws *iure ac dignitate matronali*, were members of those orders (*Tib.* 35.2).[31] Likewise, the *probrosae feminae*, whom Domitian prohibited from riding in sedan chairs, must have been of the privileged classes, since their feminine inferiors were not customarily carried in litters (*Dom.* 8.3).

If one accepts use of *femina* for ladies of the aristocracy, Augustus' edicts regarding gladiatorial events assume additional significance. When the *princeps* ruled that *feminae* could sit only in the upper rows of the amphitheatre, it is clear that he was concerned for the moral sensibilities of the ladies of his own class, and that the women of the multitudes could sit wherever they liked. This may be inferred from Suetonius' added note that Augustus excluded *muliebre secus omne* from athletic contests. There is an evident distinction between *feminae* and *muliebre secus omne*. Furthermore, the biographer relates that when boxers were scheduled to appear at the pontifical games, Augustus forbade *mulieres* to attend until the fifth hour. *Mulieres* is the general term, and Suetonius clearly means that all women, without exception, were banned from the boxing matches (*Aug.* 44).

Assumption that *femina* signifies women of the upper classes renders some of the biographer's passages more comprehensible. For instance, Claudius' habit of having *feminae* as well as *puellae* and *pretextati pueri* closely searched at his morning audiences is intended to demonstrate not only the emperor's preoccupation about assassination plots but also his outrageous behaviour toward the aristocracy (*Cl.* 35.2). Furthermore, Claudius' case against the Roman knight[32] makes more sense when one considers that he was charged with behaving in an obscene manner

[31] Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.85) notes Vistilia to be one of these women. R. Syme identifies her as a cousin of Domitius Corbulo: "Princesses and others in Tacitus," *G&R* 2nd ser. 28:1 (Apr., 1981) 51.

[32] P. Garnsey notes that the humble were tried before the urban prefect, but that the Emperor and Senate heard cases of the upper classes, although, now and then, persons of low status were brought to the upper courts for punishment. *Social Status and Legal Privelege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1970) 99-100. One might therefore assume that the *femina*, who refused to acknowledge her son and was forced to marry him by way of proof, was of high station (*Cl.* 15.2). One has more difficulty with Claudius' award of the *ius IIII liberorum* to *feminae* (*Cl.* 19), since that privilege was granted to freedwomen (Duff, *supra*, n. 18) 93 (see Iustin. *Inst.* 3.3.2). One should recall the spectacular social rise of freedmen under Claudius' aegis (*Cl.* 28), and assume similar (if lesser) ascents to prominence by *libertinae*. Were such women honoured, they would be acknowledged as *feminae*. One thinks of Claudius' *paelices*, Calpurnia and Cleopatra, who had ready access to him, and whose advice he heeded about Messalina's "wedding" to Silius (Tac. *Ann.* 11.29-30).

[33] S.B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves. Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York, 1975) 149.

before *feminae*—those officially sheltered ladies of refinement, according to the prevalent Roman social myths.[33] One can further understand the defendant's fury when *scorta* were called as witnesses. Suetonius has deliberately contrasted *feminae* and *scorta* (*Ib.* 15.4).

Femina, as we have seen in Cicero, Livy and Pliny, had a high "sympathy quotient", and was often exploited to arouse pity in the reader. Suetonius is equally expert in coaxing every drop of pathos out of the word, as when he notes that *feminae* and *pueri* were among those hurled down the Gemonian stairs and hauled away on meathooks to be dumped into the Tiber (*Tib.* 61.4). Whether or not the victims of Tiberius' supposed blood-lust were members of the upper classes, Suetonius' use of the elevated term *femina* would likely play upon the feelings of the aristocratic reader who might identify the victims with the *feminae* of his own family. In a similar manner, the reader is supposed to feel disgust with Domitian, who pitted *viri* and *feminae*—members of the privileged orders—against each other in gladiatorial combat (*Dom.* 4.1); and Suetonius' graphic description of the voracious Nero, clad *ferae pelle* (a true son of his *ferox* mother), springing from a cage and "devouring" *virorum...ac feminarum ad stipitem deligatorum inguina*, seems designed to evoke not only outrage, but also a salacious shiver in what must have been the avid reader of his sensational biographies (*Ner.* 29).

Suetonius' gender terminology follows patterns established in Cicero's speeches. Where the biographer's contemporary, Tacitus, transcends the limitations of forensic speech and incorporates gender terms artfully into the texture of his characterization, Suetonius has made no such innovations. Rather, he sticks to stock epithets, using Ciceronian gender terms as substitutes for character delineation, particularly for the personalities of minor figures, which he does not otherwise develop.[34] Suetonius' use of gender terms remains mundane, artless, and totally conventional.

[34] Baldwin cites all of Suetonius' passages in which the words *femina* and *mulier* appear. It should be noted, however, that *feminalis*, taken by Baldwin to be the adjectival form of the former, refers to Augustus' thighbones, which he kept wrapped in wool during the damp winter months (*Aug.* 82.1) (*supra*, n. 6) 374.

CHAPTER TEN

PETRONIUS AND APULEIUS: THE GOOD; THE BAD; AND THE *NEQUISSIMI*

Despite their bawdy framework, both *Satyricon* and *Metamorphoses* are said to be highly moral tales.[1] As such, they share common ground with Livy's history, and serve as excellent sources for the investigation of Latin gender terms, which themselves were fraught with moral overtones. Furthermore, both novelists, though they employ the idiom of the lower classes, are men of standing, writing for an educated audience. Petronius, Nero's *arbiter elegantiae*, like most men of his class, was trained in rhetoric; and Apuleius himself was skilled at oratory and has even been called a second Cicero.[2]

The Petronian Homo

The *Satyricon* is a mordant commentary upon Neronian "upstairs-downstairs" society, in which "downstairs" has—to the dismay of anyone who matters—moved upstairs: the freedmen have taken over the world! The story is said to be a conscious evocation of historical prose as well as Greek and Roman epic.[3] A roisterous odyssey, its more than slightly maculate hero encounters, among other dubious personages, a series of libidinous "ladies" each more lecherous than the last. The story asks this question (and answers it in the affirmative): Will man's *virtus* and woman's *pudicitia* crumble when confronted by naked opportunity and unsheathed lust?[4] When exposed to the brutal light of Petronian satire, the mantle of Augustan moral excellence, as venerated in Livy and "enshrined in historiography and love romance," is revealed as a soiled and shopworn piece of goods.[5]

Like the historical prose it parodies, the novel allows its author greater freedom of usage for its gender terms than did the political or

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[1] P.G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel: The Satyricon of Petronius and the Metamorphoses of Apuleius* (Cambridge, 1970) 23.

[2] *Ibid.*, 141.

[3] *Ilbid.*, 179-181.

[4] *Ibid.*, 11.

[5] *Ibid.*, 12.

courtroom oration. Nevertheless Petronius' gender terminology is reflective of Ciceronian usage. *Homo* is used of the lower orders and foreigners.[6] And, upon the two occasions that *vir* signifies "man", it is clearly a status word.[7]

Like Cicero, Petronius couples *homo* with *prudentissimus*. Unlike the orator, who employed such terms in a non-pejorative setting, the novelist uses *homo prudentissimus* with tongue-in-cheek (69; 105). Similarly, he converts *homo verecundissimus* into an insult, by addition of Cyclops and *archipirata*, putting the words into the mouth of the disreputable Eumolpus, who is expressing his opinion of Lichas of Tarentum, a sea-going man of affairs (101).[8]

The dissolute setting of *Satyricon* allows its characters to utter *homo* with choice pejoratives of which Cicero would have approved. For instance, Encolpius, who habitually says the wrong thing, is twice called *homo stultissime* (10; 65). He lives up to this epithet when, asking for an ithyphallic cup (unaware of the latest slang), he is brought instead an ithyphallic cup-bearer. His hostess, Quartilla, indicating that he has just fallen off the carrot *carrus*, exclaims: *O...hominem acutum atque urbanitatis vernaculae fontem*! (24)[9] When an undulating *cinaedus* croons a lurid lay, Our Hero, who cherishes no illusions about his surroundings, describes him as *homo omnium insulsissimus et plane illa domo dignus* (23).

At the notorious banquet, Trimalchio and his cronies discuss a business associate, Chrysanthus, who has set sail with Charon a few days previously. He is noted to have been a *homo negotians* (43), an expression proper for one of his class, according to Ciceronian thought.[10] The late ex-slave begins well as *homo bellus, tam bonus* (42), but panegyrics soon degenerate into the truth.[11] The reader is further informed that Chrysanthus was *salax* and that not even a dog was safe from his amorous advances; moreover, he was a *pullarius...homo* (43). *Pullarius*, in modern slang, would be termed a "chicken-hawk", or an older man who takes an inordinate interest in young boys.

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[6] *Servus homo.* (73; 71); *h. peregrinus* (127); *h. Cappadox* (63). Segebade & Lommatzsch, *Lexicon Petronianum* (Leipzig, 1898) s.v. *homo.*

[7] *V. infra*, pp. 174-75.

[8] Apuleius, however, uses *modestus homo* in a straightforward manner (8.25).

[9] "*O hominem acutum...*" implies that Encolpius is not "cool" or "with it".

[10] *V. supra*, chapter one, p. 17.

[11] De re tamen ego verum dicam, qui linguam caninam comedi: durae buccae fuit, linguosus, discordia, non homo (43).

H. equals "human being"; but use of *vir*, of a freedman being cut to verbal ribbons by his colleagues, is improbable.

The conversation eventually shifts to Glyco, a *sestertiarius homo*, who tossed his *dispensator* to the wild beasts, when, after the master had played Candaules-Gyges with his wife and slave, the former fell in love with the latter (45). *Sestertiarius* connotes "two-bit", or worthless. Trimalchio, several sheets to the wind, uses a similar expression. When contemplating his wife Fortunata, a Cassandra-in-boots, he laments that he—*homo dupundiarius* that he was—could have married someone worth ten million, but did not (74). A *dupondius* is worth even less than a *sestertius*, being equivalent to two *asses*.

A slave notes that the egregious Trimalchio is a *lautissimus homo* who keeps a clock in his *triclinium* and a uniformed trumpeter to sound the hour so that he will know how fast the years of his life are slipping by (26H). On the surface, *lautissimus* seems complimentary. It is not. If one considers Ciceronian usage, one finds that the orator employed *lautus* as a compliment for the second rate, or as an outright insult, as in the case of Verres and his henchmen (*Verr.* 1.17). He furthermore once chided G. Trebatius, who had neglected to reply to his letters, as having become *lautus* (i.e., too big for his toga) (*Fam.* 7.14.1). By terming Antony's plunder *lauta supellex*, Cicero suggets tastelessness, implying that his enemy grabbed everything in sight of value without discrimination (*Phil.* 2.66).[12] By putting the words *lautissimus homo* into the mouth of a slave, Petronius implies a lack of respect by the servant for an ex-slave-turned-master.

The author's persistent use of *homo* with pejoratives in *Satyricon* reflects his characters' opinions of each other, as when Encolpius remarks that Trimalchio is a *homo tam putidus* (54). Significantly, Petronius employs *vir* twice of the freedman, and to great effect, as the word, which preserves its sense of status, emphasizes his ridiculous nature. For instance, when a slave stumbles and crashes into Trimalchio, who bellows as if he had been mortally wounded, Encolpius worries about the fate of the slave; he is relieved when the boy is manumitted on the spot, lest anyone think that *tantum virum*, Trimalchio, had been injured by a mere slave (54). In a later episode, the insufferable host brags about his courage. He may have lost 30 million *sesterces* in a single

[12] Ostentatious lack of taste applies to the freedman-shipping magnate who, boasting about his prized bronze dinner-service, launches into an exegesis on Graeco-Roman history, explaining that Hannibal, *homo vafer et magnus stelio*, invented Corinthian bronze by melting down statues at the burning of Troy (50). *Homo* reduces even Hannibal to insignificance. cf. Cic.: provincial *equites Romani* are *lautissimi* (*Phil.* 3.16); and Suessa is a *lautissimum oppidum, nunc municipium honestissimum* (*Phil.* 13.18); *In Halesina civitate tam lauta tamque nobili...* (*Fam.* 13.32.1). *Lautus* has definite provincial connotations.

day because of a shipwreck, but undaunted by Fortune's about-face, he went on to build bigger and better vessels: "*ut nemo non me virum fortem diceret!*" (76). The word *vir* is of great import to Trimalchio; and Petronius' use of the time-honoured epithet of military valour for this churl is supremely ironical.[13]

Petronian Bawds and Strumpets

Petronian females are deemed to be women of marked individuality, who more than in any other kind of ancient literature, serve a primary function in the narrative.[14] Full-blooded, they take direct part in the action, as did Livy's Tullia or Tacitus' Agrippina. Where the historians, however, writing within the confines of their idiom, were able to present only a skeletal form of the ambitious woman who stops at nothing, including murder and sacrilege, to achieve her self-seeking goals, Petronius was able to develop the stereotype, drawn—as Livy's evidently was—from comedy, romance and Menippean satire.[15] Petronian women are just as rapacious as those of Livy or Tacitus. Their characters are, however, multifaceted and undergo changes: thus Encolpius' initial perception of women is often faulty.[16]

Perhaps the most fitting description of Petronian women is provided by Seleucus, one of the libertine *deipnosophistai* at Trimalchio's banquet who, speaking of women in general, compares *mulieres* to vultures (42). The episode serves as a starting point for the study of *mulier* and *femina*, since it is complete. Petronius is clearly dealing with a world where vulgarity is the keyword;[17] he employs *mulier* repeatedly either in

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[13] Except in poetical sections (89.27; 57; 119.21; 27; 121.110; 118; 123.194) *vir* is used only seven times. Four of these denote "husband": 67; 111; 112 (*bis*); *v. supra*, chapter two, n. 4. Three other instances set *vir* into a sexual context; it assumes its inherent connotations of masculine prowess: (1) when Quartilla informs the artless-but-willing-to-learn Encolpius that she had enjoyed her first *vir* before the age of seven (25); (2) when the beauteous Circe recommends herself as partner to the not-much-wiser hero, assuring him that she is a *femina ornata* (an expression intended to certify her virtue and suggest that her erstwhile virginity is of recent memory) who has known her first *vir* that very year (127); (3) when the lubricious Tryphaena taunts Encolpius that if he were a *vir*, he would not be visiting the sphinctrian, or professional sodomite (113).

[14] F.F. Abbot, "The use of language as a means of characterization in Petronius," *CP* 2 (1907) 288.

[15] *Ibid.*, 267-8.

[16] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) notes character changes in Quartilla (p. 91) and Fortunata (p. 119); and J.P. Sullivan sees similar alterations in the *personae* of Tryphaena and Circe, *The Satyricon of Petronius: a Literal Study* (London, 1968) 64; 122.

[17] Walsh calls Fortunata's characterization "superbly vulgar" (*supra*, n. 1) 119.

reference to women at the banquet, or to those discussed by the guests.[18] None of these females are termed *feminae*, a word that the author reserves for Trimalchio![19] The *mulieres* Fortunata and her girlfriend Scintilla are jewel-bedecked bawds who seem to have escaped from the Plautine stage, or from Catonian invective as conceived by Livy. It is as if all of Cato's horrors of *luxuria* and *avaritia* have been realized in the worst possible way; for Fortunata and Scintilla are not aristocratic *matronae* but common *libertae*.

Where the women of Cato's day, until the repeal of the law, were restricted to one-half ounce of gold and forbidden to wear parti-coloured garments (Liv. 34.1.3), Fortunata, clad in garish red and yellow, is weighed down by at least six-and-a-half pounds of the metal—according to Trimalchio, who sends for a scale to prove it. He terms her finery *mulieris compedes* (67). Scintilla, equally prodigal, possesses the finest pair of gold earrings in all Rome, which are so valuable that she keeps them locked in a gold casket chained to her neck. Her husband, Habinnas, laments that if it were not for *mulieres*, the best things in life would be cheap, if not free, and he adds that if he had a daughter, he would cut off her ears! (67). Catonian *verecundia* (Liv. 34.1.5) is unheard of with these two, and it follows that Fortunata lands, *indecentissima*, flat on her back, heels-over-head, with a *vir alienus*—other than her husband, that is (67; cf. Liv. 34.2.9).

Fortunata has all the attributes of a *mulier* of the worst sort, and none of the desired qualities of a *femina*. As Trimalchio's *topanta*, she has a finger in every pie, and is the type to whom Cato alluded: *in publicum procurrendi et obsidendi vias et viros alienos appellandi* (Liv. 34.2.9).[20] This is evident from Encolpius' enquiry: "*Quae esset mulier illa quae huc atque illuc discurreret?*" (37) He is informed that his hostess is up from the gutter *in caelum*, a *lupatria* who has amassed a fortune *quae nummos modio metitur* (37); her name not only implies good luck, but hard cash. Although Balsdon, oddly, includes her in his chapter on happy marriages,[21] it is evident that the union of Fortunata and Trimalchio is far from blissful. He is henpecked; she, a nit-picking termagant. To Trimalchio,

[18] J.N. Adams, "Latin words for "woman" and "wife"," *Glotta* 50 (1972) 250. The scholar notes that Petronius' freedmen always call their wives *mulieres*, and he attributes such usage to a "sub-literary level" of Latin. One notes that the few inscriptions from the city of Rome that employ the word *mulier* as wife belong to freed slaves. *CIL* 6. *V. supra*, chapter two, n. 13.

[19] *V. infra*, pp. 177-78

[20] On *procurro* and *discurro*, *v. supra*, chapter five, p. 90, n. 50.

[21] J.P.V.D. Balsdon, *Roman Women, their History and their Habits* (London, 1972) 206.

Fortunata is certainly no *femina*; he states that she is not even a *mulier* but rather a *codex* (74), the connotations of which range from "account book" to "block of wood," or blockhead, by transference.[22] Trimalchio growls that *mulieres* born under the sign of Virgo are in a class with runaway slaves (*fugitivi*) and members of a chain-gang (*compediti*) (39). *Mulier* in this case not only denotes woman but also wife, and since the original meaning of *codex* was the trunk of a tree to which persons were bound for punishment,[23] Fortunata (with her *mulieris compedes*), in the slang of the 1930's, may be considered Trimalchio's "ball-and-chain."

Petronius employs *mulier* in two situations during the course of the freedman's banquet: in dialogue or description. Axelson notes that the freedmen always use the term *mulier*.[24] One might argue that their remarks usually concern women in general, and that *mulier* therefore merely represents the neutral "woman." Nevertheless, the fact remains that all comments about *mulieres* are invariably negative. They furthermore concern women of the lower classes, for whom the term *femina* would be inappropriate; and although real-life freedmen did usurp the aristocratic term for use on tombstones,[25] these Petronian jades have failed to live up even to libertine standards.

Other refractory freedwomen include a *mulier* chariot driver (45), and one who, dry-eyed at the funeral of her late unlamented husband, prompts Seleucus' complaint: *Sed mulier quae mulier milvinum genus* (42); others are *strigae*, and Trimalchio warns ominously of *mulieres plussciae...nocturnae* (women who know a little more than they should, and congregate at night)—witches (63).

Speech is said to be an essential element of Petronian characterization, reflecting the extremes of Latin, from educated usage to its opposite.[26] One might therefore conclude that the novelist did not supply *mulier* carelessly, but was well aware of its nuances. This is demonstrated by Trimalchio's cynical use of *femina*. Well into his cups, he confesses to having served, while a slave, as his *dominus' femina*. As the

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[22] C.T. Lewis and Ch. Short, *A New Latin Dictionary* (N.Y., 1894) s.v. *caudex*; cf. P.G.W. Glare, *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1982-88) s.v. *caudex*.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] B. Axelson, *Unpoetische Woerter, ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Lateinischen Dichtersprache* (Lund, 1945) 55.

[25] *v. supra*, chapter two, n. 13. B. Boyce demonstrates that Petronius uses the language of freedmen to illustrate their fundamental lapses in literacy and education as well as their social pretensions: *The Language of Freedmen in Petronius' Cena Trimalchionis*, Bibliotheca Classica Batava, *Mnemosyne*, Suppl. 117 (Leiden, 1991) 37-102.

[26] J. Tatum, *Apuleius and the Golden Ass* (Ithaca and London, 1979) 149. cf. Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 121-123.

status word *vir* was important to Trimalchio, so is *femina*. Fraught with psychological overtones, it places him in his own mind on a level with his *dominus* in what was, from his subsequent remarks, a humiliating experience. Trimalchio was no man's *mulier*; he states that there was nothing *turpe* in his actions—he was only obeying orders—and adds that he used to give satisfaction to his *domina* as well (75). Both *vir* and *femina*, placed into Trimalchio's mouth, help delineate his character, exposing the freedman as a status-conscious upstart.

Petronius' persistent use of *homo* of Trimalchio and his fellow louts and *mulier* of Fortunata and her trashy chum, of whom he has nothing good to say, may be a reflection of personal antipathy towards a class which had made great advances in the preceding fifty years.[27] It may also be an evocation of romantic historiography as represented by Livy, who employed similar methods in dealing with the freedwoman Hispala Faecinia.[28] Most of all, it reflects Petronius' skill at characterization, in providing his personages with the appropriate words. By no stretch of the imagination are Trimalchio and company conceived of as *viri*, or Fortunata and her co-hussy thought of, even ironically, as *feminae*.

Quartilla is another *mulier* who is no *femina*.[29] While the episode is fragmentary, it is unthinkable that Petronius ever envisioned her as a *femina* in the lost parts of the story. The Neronian novelist makes it patently clear that Quartilla's sole purpose in the tale is to sustain the reader's prurient interest and that she is a woman of no redeeming social importance. Quartilla is a priestess, the customary epithet for which is *femina*.[30] The *mulier*, however, not only practices nocturnal rites behind closed doors, but she is also a priestess of Priapus. Petronius notes that the cult's mascot was a pet goose that was *omnibus matronis acceptissimus* (137). About the fowl's exact function he does not hint, but one may be certain that it boded ill for matronly *pudicitia*.[31] The goose has porno-

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[27] L.R. Taylor, "Freedmen and freeborn in the epitaphs of imperial Rome," *AJP* 82.2 (1961) 131.

[28] *V. supra*, chapter five, pp. 91-93.

[29] She and her maids are called *mulieres*: 15; 16; 18; 19.

[30] e.g., the high priestess of Venus, the *misericordior feminarum* of Plautus' *Rudens* (281), *v. supra, chapter* two, p. 32.; an epigraphical example: Flavia Epicharis, *Sacerdotia deae virgini caelestis praesentissimo numini loci montis Tarpei*, bears the title *honorifica femina* in a dedication of 259 A.D. (*CIL* 6. 37170). Adams notes that nuns were designated *feminae* in the post-Roman period (*supra*, n. 18) 236.

[31] One recalls the phallic-headed fowl on a Dionysiac pedestal at Delos: French School of Athens, *Guide de Délos* (Paris, 1965) 131; Livy notes geese to be sacred to Juno (5.47.4.), but given the Satyricon's salacious setting, Petronius doubtless had something less wholesome in mind. J.M.C. Toynbee quotes *Sat.* 136-37, but offers no revelations on the fowl's significance, *Animals in Roman Life and Art* (London, 1973) 263.

graphic implications and is mentioned with comic purpose in order to delineate the orgiastic nature of the cult as well as matronly participation. As for its high priestess, Quartilla, her character degenerates during the course of the narrative. As Walsh remarks: [her] "elegant respectability melts away to reveal the bawdy woman of wealth, the predatory huntress whose secrets 'scarce a thousand men have shared'."[32] Recollections of lost innocence and virginity are enshrouded in the mists of personal antiquity (25). She rewards Encolpius' peep at her priapic devotions with another such: the erotic exertions of the boy Giton with her seven year-old *ancilla*, the appropriately named Pannychis, and Encolpius objects that she is not old enough *ut muliebris patientiae posset accipere* (25).

Walsh envisions this and other episodes in which the mock-epic hero is buffeted by the wrath of Priapus to be scathing commentaries upon "prevalent religious and moral attitudes" reflected in "pietistic fiction," as well as an assault by Petronius' picaresque Aeneas on the "canons of *pietas* and *virtus*, *dignitas* and *pudicitia*."[33] It is all these things and more. The Quartilla episode is a spoof on Livy, replete with slogans and *topoi* continually applied to cults perceived as threats to the State;[34] the episode could be well sub-titled: "Behind Closed Doors; Nocturnal Mysteries Revealed!" As Walsh observes, Petronius parodies historians and "introduces all manner of literary allusions."[35] Though it may be pure coincidence that Quartilla is a Campanian priestess, like Paculla Annia, whom Livy credited with converting the original Dionysiac cult

[32] Walsh quoting Sullivan (*supra*, n. 1) 91.

[33] *Ibid*, 79; cf. Sullivan (*supra*, n. 16) 92.

[34] It should be recalled that Priapus was an associate of Bacchus-Dionysus. Their common attribute was the ass; R.T. v. der Paardt observes that the animal was connected with the lusty god because of apparent shared physical endowments: *L. Apuleius Madaurensis: a Commentary on Book 3 with Text and Introduction* (Amsterdam, 1971) 7; the ass appears on many Dionysiac *sarcophagi* either as a mount for Silenus, or else pulling his wagon. Both are drunk, F. Matz, *Die Dionysischen Sarkophage* (Berlin, 1975) vol. 1, pp. 70-71. The activities of Quartilla and her coterie reflect the popular conceptions prompted by the rhetoric of on-going official propaganda promulgated against nocturnal rites in general and orgiastic cults in particular. Official perceptions and fears are reflected in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who notes that in Augustus' day, there were no frenzied corybants or bacchanals; no secret ceremonies or nocturnal sacrifices attended by men and women together (2.19.2); Philo Judaeus observes that Augustus allowed the Jews to meet in synagogues, as their religious observances were not based upon roisterous carousals which were merely excuses to disturb the peace (*De Legat*. 311-12). Pliny the Younger writes that he can find no evidence that the Christians are meeting for criminal intent or adultery (10.96). These passages demonstrate the continuing worry about religious observances being pretexts for *coniuratio*. Furthermore, the persistence of anti-Bacchanalian rhetoric shows that the issue of *prava religio* had never died out.

[35] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 66.

into a degenerate Bacchanal,[36] all the other ingredients of the *topos* are present: *nox, vinum, mulieres* and *adulescentuli*, the recipe for a first-rate bacchanalian binge.The torches are lit, the *mulieres* are awash with Falernian, and Quartilla is *libidine accensa*.[37]

Where the clash of cymbals in Livy's book 39 is said to have drowned out the vociferations of *stuprum* and murder (39.8.8), Petronius' gongs are sounded to awake the exhausted devotees and incite them to further *stuprum* (22-23). There are similar evocations of Livy in the *ebriae mulieres longum agmen plaudentes* who attend the children's "wedding" (26), *agmina* of *mulieres* being a favourite Livian source of trouble.[38]

The episodes of Tryphaena and Circe, like that of Quartilla, are fragmentary. Nevertheless, they provide examples of Petronius' employment of *mulier* and *femina*, both synonyms being used to designate each woman. Tryphaena, whose name is a common one for slaves, is seen by Walsh to be the superstitious, hedonistic cosmopolite.[39] She is, furthermore, wealthy and beautiful; and Eumolpus, in an attempt to reassure the suspicious Encolpius about her presence on board ship, describes her in glowing terms as *omnium feminarum formosissima*, who is roaming the earth in search of *voluptates* (101). This line, and the use of *femina*, is likely to provide the reader—who has already been informed that the "lady" is being deported to Tarentum (100)—with a chuckle. Just as *femina* was an important element in Palaestrio's salespitch

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[36] Livy, 39.13.9

[37] Cum vinum animos incendisset, et nox et mixti feminis mares, aetatis tenerae maioribus, discrimen omne pudoris extinxissent, curruptelae primum omnis generis fieri coeptae, cum ad id quisque, quo natura pronioris libidinis esset, paratam voluptatem haberet (Liv. 39.8.6-7).

[38] *Agmen mulierum*, indicative of disorderly female behaviour: *v. supra*, chapter five, pp. 83-85. The children's wedding reminds Walsh of Nero's marriage to Pythagoras (Tac. *Ann.* 15.37.9) (*supra*, n. 6) 91. It seems to be a composite spoof on the *topoi* of historiography, being even more reminiscent of the wedding of Cupid and Psyche, as enacted by cavorting *amorini* upon first century wall paintings and later Dionysiac *sarcophagi*: S. Reinach, *Repertoire de Reliefs Grecs et Romains*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1912) 471; Cupid and Psyche appear as immature lovers or as infants: M. Borde, *La Pittura Romana* (Milan, 1958) 236; Reinach, *op. cit.* vol. 3, 229, no. 2. They engage in amorous activities as if fully grown. There is also a sarcophagus depicting the infant Psyche as a Maenad, and Cupid as Dionysus (294, no. 1). The former appears by himself or with other erotes paying homage to Priapus, either crushing grapes or dancing around a wine vat (295, no. 3). In other scenes, Cupid sits at a nuptial couch with a winged feminine counterpart, attended by a procession of inebriated cherubs to the accompaniment of music (366, no. 2). All seem to have been inspired by Petronius who himself seems to evoke Livy and the long tradition of anti-Bacchanalian rhetoric (*CIL* 14.3565 presents a long incantation to Priapus that mentions Cupid and Bacchus.). On the wrath of Priapus, Sullivan (*supra*, n. 16) 92.

[39] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 100.

of the *ingenua*-next-door to Pyrgopolynices,[40] so *femina* is used by Eumolpus to confirm the supposed respectability of Tryphaena.

Cracks, however, soon appear in the brittle veneer of Tryphaena's civility, and Encolpius' estimation of her true nature is substantiated. She is a *mulier damnata* (108) and a *mulier libidinosa*, who disburses *blanditiae* and quenches her lust with young boys (113). Is it any surprise that she wears high heels and false eyebrows, and declaims epic poetry in stentorian tones on the subjects of Medea *furens*, love scorned, death, floods, and savage seas (109)? As Walsh notes, Tryphaena is the embodiment of "cruelty and luxury".[41]

Her partner in *libido*, Lichas, addresses her in exasperation: "*O te...feminam simplicem*!" (106), which remark Adams deems to be a rare example of the neutral use of *femina*.[42] This interpretation seems unlikely since *simplex* renders *femina* pejorative, and Lichas is furious with Tryphaena. Both characters fancy themselves as wealthy cosmopolites, and they speak in an elevated rhetorical style.[43] Petronius chose his words carefully,[44] and *femina* is the *mot juste* for the self-proclaimed man-of-the-world to use. Employed in tandem with *simplex*, *femina* lends the insult an ironic flavour, reminiscent of the piccante repartee of a Noel Coward comedy.

Circe is a *matrona* of extraordinary beauty, in whom Walsh sees the archetype of the high-born lady of mime: a predatory nymphomaniac who seeks sexual gratification from a slave.[45] Petronius hints at her true character when her maid Chrysis expounds upon certain *feminae* who are consumed with lust for slaves, actors, or dust-covered gladiators (126). As Adams notes, Chrysis is referring to "women of standing."[46] She observes that her *domina* is such, and that when she attends the theatre, she always purchases seats fourteen rows back from the orchestra so that she can seek a lover from among the plebs (126) (Paradoxically, Chrysis herself never sits anywhere but among the knights.). As with Tryphaena, however, Circe's beauty is skin deep. She is the namesake of the enchantress, and Chrysis utters opaque allusions to *mulieres* who *etiam lunam deducunt* (129).[47] Furthermore, Encolpius damns Circe as a

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[40] *v. supra*, chapter two, pp. 31-32
[41] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 41.
[42] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 239, n. 46.
[43] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 100.
[44] Tatum (*supra*, n. 26) 149.
[45] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 105-7.
[46] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 237.
[47] *V. infra*, p. 191. Cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 8.69; Apul. *Met.* 1.8.

pitiless *mulier* who has assaulted him in revenge for his impotence (132).

Petronius' judgmental applications of *mulier* and *femina* are well illustrated in the "Milesian Tale" of the Widow of Ephesus. This fable, which exposes the Augustan sham of upper class feminine *pudicitia*, is preserved in its entirety. An illustration of *muliebris levitas*, its moral, proclaimed by Eumolpus, is that there is no *femina* so *pudica* that she cannot be driven *ad furorem* by *peregrina libidine* (110).[48]

The sorrowing widow is envisioned as a "latter-day Lucretia,"[49] and an "anti-Dido",[50] whose portrait is painted in the umbrageous shades of the palette of Senecan *consolatio* and sepulchral rhetoric, as well as in the candid tints of romantic historiography.[51] Her story is told by the seedy Eumolpus, and the gender terms which Petronius puts into his mouth lend insight to his thoughts as he describes the Widow who, as long as her chastity perseveres,[52] is a *femina*. From the very beginning, however, Petronius' reader is well aware that he is dealing with the fabulous:

> Matrona quaedam Ephesi tam notae erat pudicitiae, ut vicinarum quoque gentium feminas ad spectaculum sui evocaret. (111)

The indefinite *quaedam* is the customary introduction to the fairytale,[53] and one might render this one as: "Once-upon-a-time, there was a married woman of Ephesus so renowned for her virtue that all the well-born ladies for miles around would gaggle together to gaze upon such a wondrous sight!"

This tale, which exalts the image of the perfect *matrona*, whom *feminae* can never hope to emulate, is a spoof on aristocratic values (and historical *exempla*), and Petronius' sophisticated readers will not fail to perceive its eventual moral implications.

Not content to mourn her husband *vulgari more...passis...crinibus nudatum pectus*, the distraught widow follows his bier into the hypogeum, where *Graeco more corpus custodire ac flere totis noctibus diebusque coepit.* In consequence, she herself is mourned by the populace as a *singularis exempli femina* (111). This expression, and others similar, which Petronius seems to have borrowed from eulogistic rhetoric, was to become a commonplace upon Roman sepulchral inscriptions of the

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[48] O. Pecere views the episode as a bitter denunciaton of the vices of rampant luxury and revolting hypocrisy, *Petronio: la Novella della Matrona di Efeso* (Padua, 1975) 7-8.

[49] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 12.

[50] A. dell'Era, *Problemi di lingua e stile in Petronio* (Rome, 1970) 181.

[51] *Ibid.* 16; 20; Walsh (*supra*, n.1) 11-12; 52.

[52] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 237.

[53] Pecere (*supra*, n. 48) 42.

late first century and afterwards.[54] Enclosed within the tomb, the widow becomes an effulgent and solitary *exemplum* of true *pudicitia*, *fides*, and *amor*. However, intimations of sexuality intrude upon Petronius' tableau of pious solitude. A soldier, guarding some crucified felons, hears a noise and descends into the sepulchre; when, in the half-gloom, he spies a pretty woman (*visaque pulcherrima muliere*), he first mistakes her for a revenant or vampire.[55] He is greatly relieved to discover that she is, in reality, a *femina*, who cannot bear the loss of her husband (111). Adams notes that "at this point in the story [she] is still a singular model of chastity."[56]

Petronius, through his knavish narrator, Eumolpus, is foreshadowing the Widow's eventual downfall. As a *pulcherrima mulier*, she is the object of the normal appetites of the *miles*; moreover, her faithful *ancilla*—cast as Anna to her mistress' Dido[57]—is a *muliercula*, whose own appetite can be stimulated with food (111). Although A. Marbach notes connotations of weakness as well as an element of despite in the term, he fails to see the sexual implications as found in Ciceronian rhetoric; *muliercula* and *meretricula* were synonymous.[58] The *ancilla*, no better than she should be, makes it clear to the *miles* that her *domina* is prone to stubborness and afflicted by *muliebri errore* (111). These are

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[54] Lutatia Casta, *singularis exsempli femina* (sic) (*CIL* 6. 21732); Iulia Severa Kyriagathe, *magni et rari in omnibus exemplis vitae suae femina* (*sic*) (6.20679). Gavia Flora, *rari exempli femina* (6.18930); Unnamed, *rari exempli femina* (6.19029); Aurelia Iusta, *unici exempli atque egregiae castitatis femina* (6.31955); Flavia Tertia, *rarissim(i) exempli femi(na)* (6.10697); Aur. Mariame, *rari exempli femina* (13356). Such figures of speech recur in Apuleius' one-dimensional portrait of Plotina, another woman of perfection. Walsh sees her as evidence of Apuleian romanticism, which he believes to be in direct contrast to Petronian cynicism in the character of the Widow (*supra*, n. 1) 161-2. Plotina is memorialized as a *rarae fidei atque singularis pudicitiae femina* (7.6), who shuns the city's fleshpots in order to share her husband's exile; and a *sanctissima—vera enim dicenda sunt—et unicae fidei femina* (7.7), who relentlessly badgers Roman authorities for justice on her husband's behalf. Actually, Apuleius' cynicism seems even more scathing than that of Petronius: in characterizing this colourless paragon—who seems to have stepped off the same tiresome pedestal as Livy's Cloelia or Pliny's Fannia—in tombstone rhetoric, he conveys a subtle message; in consideration of the other ghastly women of the *Metamorphoses*, the only perfect *femina* seems to be a dead one. cf. J.J. Winkler, who notes that the peerless Plotina has sold out Theron's band to the Roman authorities, *Auctor and Actor: a Narratological Reading of Apuleius's "The Golden Ass"* (Berkeley, 1985) 28. Plotina's gender epithets are, very likely, ironical.

[55] Her prototype is Phaedrus' widow, a *pulcherrima femina* (A 15.17) and, in what Pecere terms a sarcastic moral qualification, when she is spied by the soldier, a *sancta mulier* (A 15.28) (*supra*, n. 48) 12-13.

[56] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 237.

[57] Dell'Era (*supra*, n. 49) 180; cf. Walsh (*supra*, n.1) 12.

[58] J.S.T. Hannsen, *Latin Diminutives: a Semantic Study* (Bergen, 1951) 198; cf. A Marbach, *Wortbildung, Wortwahl und Wortbedeutung als Mittel der Charakterzeichnung bei Petron* (Gießen, 1931) 50.

encouraging words to the warrior, and Eumolpus encloses the couple inside the tomb for three nights. When they emerge, they have undergone what is seen to be a transformation of roles:[59] the Widow, four times designated a *mulier* (112), becomes the aggressor, and the *miles*, the weakling.[60] When he wishes to commit suicide after persons unknown have filched one of the corpses he was supposed to have been guarding, the obliging Widow invites him to nail up her late husband. Eumolpus characterizes her sardonically as a *mulier non minus misericors quam pudica*, and Petronius writes an epitaph for feminine virtue as the the soldier takes advantage of the woman's cleverness, lauding her, in the ironic phrases of the tombstone, as a *prudentissima femina*. Now the populace flocks to marvel not at the Widow's wondrous *pudicitia* but rather at the miraculous corpse, which has, somehow, reappeared on the cross (112).

Petronius is said to have constructed an ironical language to describe the conventional manifestations of the *matrona*'s grief as well as the ritual of mourning; evocative of epic poetry, the language also serves to lend the Widow's character two dimensions.[61] The author's use of *mulier* and *femina* have contributed to the bi-dimensionality.

Apuleius and the Ciceronian Homo

The prose of the *Metamorphoses* has been labeled "bizarre", being full of alliteration and assonance, ornaments of style at which Cicero would have sneered.[62] Even though the novelist used *vir* to refer to specific persons far more than he did *homo*,[63] his employment of the latter, in two instances, reflects Ciceronian vituperation. In the first, Lucius asks directions to Milo's house and is told that his future host is a rich usurer: *verum extremae avaritiae et sordis infimae infamis homo*. Milo keeps one maid and a wife clad in rags, and counts coins all day long (1.21). Upon learning this, the hero-soon-to-be-an-ass exclaims that his old chum Demeas has certainly recommended him to "*tali viro*"! Although Cicero might have shunned the epithet *sordis infimae infamis homo*,

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[59] *Ibid.*, 184.

[60] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 12; *mulieres* are habitually bold.

[61] Pecere (*supra*, n. 48) 16.

[62] A. Scobie, *Apuleius' Metamorphoses (Asinus Aureus) I; A Commentary* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1975) 21-22.

[63] *Homo*, of specific persons, is used 16 times in undisputed passages; *vir*, 22 times (*Homo*, meaning men in general—e.g., "men think" or "hundreds of men"—used 36 times, is not under consideration in this study which concerns gender terms only as applied to individual persons.)

there is no mistaking its pejorative nature and its contrast to *vir*, which has been uttered ironically.

Ciceronian evocations are very apparent in the second instance, in which Apuleius places *homo* with Bacchanalian rhetoric into the mouth of the now asinine Lucius:

> Quod oleum flammae, quod sulpur incendio, quod flagellum Furiae, hoc et iste sermo truculentiae hominis nutrimento fuit. Iamque ad extremam insaniam vecors, suspendium sese et totis illis et ipsis legibus mandare proclamans...(9.36).

The *homo* in question, who seems to be a direct spiritual descendent of P. Clodius, is *vesanus* as well as *vecors*; he has tried to chisel his *verecundus* neighbour out of his *domus* and surrounding farmlands by honeyed promises (*blanditiis permulcentibus*) and tyrannical *superbia*. Apuleius has told the tale in language evocative of Cicero's castigation of Clodius.[64] Both episodes, in fact, recall the orator's use of *homo* as a term of abuse.

The Apuleian Vir: *a Stranger in an even Stranger Land*

Although Apuleius' use of *vir* is reminiscent of that of Cicero, Livy and other writers of the first century,[65] in the metamorphic world of Lucius, traditional laudatory epithets occur in unexpected contexts. Characters and situations undergo constant reidentification.[66] This is illustrated in the adventure of Lamachus, a fearless bandit chief, in which *vir* and *virtus*—cornerstones of the Republic and Empire—are seen darkly through the blood-spattered glass of the brigand. A fellow free-booter relates how Lamachus, *tantus vir*, was destroyed by too much *virtus* (4.8). When, confident *spectatae virtutis suae*, he plunged his arm through a hole in the door of a house he was attempting to burgle, a low-down two-footed varmint (*omnium bipedum nequissimus*) named Chryseros nailed his hand to the door (4.10). Debating whether to abandon their leader or to stay and die fighting, his loyal confederates choose the better part of valour and effect Lamachus' escape by parting him from his hand at the shoulder. Although he entreats them to end his misery, his *comilitiones* refuse to commit *parricidium* on a confrere. Ever mindful

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[64] *Blanditiae* rank high among the tactics of prostitutes and tribunes (*supra*, chapter one). Winkler cites Apuleius' parody of Cicero's first Catilinarian uttered by Lucius the Ass (3.27) (*supra*, n. 54) 87.

[65] He employs the noun in contexts of bravery, strength and virility; as an indicator of status and wealth; and sometimes as an instrument of flattery or even sarcasm.

[66] Winkler (*supra*, n. 54) 87.

of his comrades' welfare, Lamachus, *vir sublimis animi virtutisque praecipuus,* grasps his sword (with his remaining hand), and, with one thrust, runs himself through (4.10-11). The parody of *vir* and *virtus* contribute to the humour of the bloody episode.

In another lurid story,[67] a newcomer, hailing the gang as *fortissimo deo Marti clientes*, asks them to receive a *virum magnanimae vivacitatis volentem* into their company. He introduces himself as a *praedo famosus, Haemus ille Thracius*, son of Theron, an equally notorious bandit, and brags that he has been suckled on human blood (7.5).[68] Haemus, Charite's husband in disguise, has used *vir* to enhance his image as a swashbuckling desperado.

An expression of the Republic, *strenuus vir*[69] is parodied in the "Tale of the Tub". When her husband is about to sell the vat under which her lover is concealed, for five *denarii*, the backsliding wife chides:

> Magnum...istum virum ac strenuum negotiatorem nacta sum, qui rem, quam ego mulier et intra hospitium contenta iamdudum septem denariis vendidi, minoris distraxit (9.6).

Likewise, *prudens vir*, which connoted conservatism in Cicero and political expediency in Livy,[70] is converted into baneful flattery as another errant wife, about to poison a perfidious physician with one of his own venemous distillations, lulls him into a sense of false security, assuring him that he is *tam prudens tamque doctus vir* (10.26).

Otherwise the term falls into familiar expressions of physical superiority[71] and social or moral worth.[72] In the following passage, in which Aristomenes fears that no one will believe his fantastic story, Apuleius juxtaposes *vir* with *homo* and *mulier*:

> Proclamares saltem suppetiatum, si resistere vir tantus mulieri nequibas: sub oculis tuis homo iugulatur, ut siles? (1.14).

The masculine terms help the reader distinguish between the two friends. Also implied is the strength of the immobile *vir* against the onslaught of a mere *mulier*, as well as the helplessness of the victim. When a listener

[67] Winkler notes Apuleius' sensationalism (*supra*, n. 54) 95.

[68] Winkler cites Haemus repeated reidentification of character in his numerous disguises, which include that of a *mulier asinaria* (*supra*, n. 54) 88.

[69] *v. supra*, chapter four, n. 11.

[70] *v. supra*, chapters one and four.

[71] *Vir* signifies virility when, about to engage in amatory combat [Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 152-3], the nubile Photis issues a challenge that if Lucius be a *vir*, he will fight to the finish (2.17).

[72] Charite's suitors are *viri*, including wicked Thrasyllus, who is well-born, rich and handsome (8.2). In contrast: *servulus homo* (8.22; 26); *frugi autem et solitarii homines*: those who must struggle for a living (4.9).

expresses doubts about the tale, its narrator turns to Lucius and asks: "*Vir, ut habitus et habitudo demonstrat, ornatus, accredis huic fabulae?*" As can be seen by the appositive phrase, *vir* authenticates the respectability of the well-bred Lucius who believes every word of Aristomenes' grotesque tale (1.20).

Good family and wealth are implicit in *vir* when Lucius, arriving at Plataea, encounters Demochares, a *vir et genere primarius et opibus plurimus et liberalitate praecipuus*, who, *digno fortunae suae splendore publicas voluptates instruebat* (4.13). Respectability is also implied when the robbery of Milo is reported, and Lucius is horrified to discover that he (in his human form) is the prime suspect; the malefactor is described as a *nescioqui* Lucius, who has masqueraded as a *vir bonus* (7.1). The donkey then philosophizes that *veteris priscaeque doctrinae viros* were right in portraying Fortune as blind; he concludes that where a scoundrel continually basks in the *boni viri fama*, the pure-of-heart, constantly getting the shafts of outrageously myopic Fortune, loses his reptutation (7.2). The tormented ass also finds consolation in philosophy when his peregrinations have brought him to the comfortless shelter of a baker's stable.[73] Now lodged amongst a cluster of spavined, mangy nags, he contemplates the wisdom of the divine Homer who counselled that he who has travelled far, to many places, and has observed and accrued many experiences along the way, is a *summae prudentiae vir* (9.13).[74]

As priestesses are *feminae*,[75] so priests are *viri*—as is that of Isis: *ille vir alioquin gravis et sobriae religionis observatione famosus, clementer ac comiter* (11.21)—except when Lucius falls in with a group of castrated cenobites of the Syrian goddess, in which case they are *semiviri* (8.28). Placing her image on his back, with clanging cymbals and rattling tambourines, they make a noisy entrance into a well-appointed town where the patron is a *vir principalis et alias religiosus et eximie deam reverens* (8.30). *Vir*, in reference to the priest of Isis and the town-father, is synonymous with moral worth.[76]

[73] Lucius judges his new employer, the baker, to be a *bonus alioquin vir et adprime modestus* with a singular lack of aptitude in choosing a marriage partner: *pessimam et ante cunctas mulieres longe deterrimam sortitus coniugam, poenas extremas tori, Larisque sustinebat* (9.14).

[74] The *philosophans asinus* as wandering Odysseus represents disunity, according to Winkler, who believes that such passages invoke the authority of the narrator rather than the actor. He translates *summae prudentiae vir* as "man of supreme discrimination" (*supra*, n. 54) 165-67.

[75] *v. supra*, n. 30.

[76] Winkler characterizes the *extremus homo* of 4.9 as a "leprous pauper", despised by Fortune (*supra*, n. 54) 90-91.

The Witch, the Poisoner, and the Adulteress

Apuleius' use of *mulier* and *femina* in many ways parallels that of Petronius. Not only does he apply the former to members of the lower classes,[77] but like the Neronian author, he also uses it in reference to witches and adulterous women (who may also be poisoners), with which the *Metamorphoses* abounds. The novelist furthermore demonstrates the conventional use of *femina*, employing it as an indicator of high station or salient virtue.[78] Although Apuleius' characters may not seem as well drawn as those of Petronius, the former author's application of language is better developed than that of the latter. As Tatum remarks, Petronian verisimilitude of speech is not an Apuleian factor: "no matter how depraved a character...[,] no matter how uncouth, his language is never anything less than elegant or grammatical."[79] Apuleian linguistical floridity may render his characters less colourful than those of his predecessor, but it also contributes to more subtle application of speech. This becomes particularly evident in his usage of *mulier* and *femina*, the latter of which, like *vir*, sometimes crops up in odd contexts or with a reversal of its customary implications—often with pejorative adjectives in the midst of a series of *mulier*-plus-negative modifiers. Adams holds Apuleius responsible for the supposed degeneration of the aristocratic term.[80] The Madauran novelist, however, was not the first to have employed *femina* with pejoratives, as readers of Tacitus will recall, and, as shall be demonstrated, the term—which Adams himself notes to be indicative of the upper classes until the sixteenth century[81]—has degenerated not one jot in the vocabulary of an author who chose every word with forethought.

It must again be emphasized that nothing in the *Metamorphoses* is as it appears to be at first glance. Characters as well as figures of speech undergo multiple permutations.[82] The words *mulier* and *femina* contribute in varying degrees to the ephemeral atmosphere of the tale. For

[77] Low born *mulieres*: Meroe, a female innkeeper who is also a witch (1.12); a gardener's wife (4.3); Haemus, disguised as a female muleteer (7.8); a shepherd woman (8.17); and the impoverished wife of a blacksmith (9.5).

[78] e.g., Byrrhaena, a lady of rank, *infra*, p. 190.

[79] Tatum (*supra*, n. 26) 149.

[80] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 238.

[81] *Ibid.* 235.

[82] Tatum writes that "the essence of the *Golden Ass* is that no event or character...can be trusted to remain what it may seem to be. Nothing that is said— even by the narrator— can be taken at face value." (*supra*, n. 26) 21. cf. Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 151; 172; Winkler (*supra*, n. 54) 87.

instance, Charite, who enters the story as a *puella* and *virgo*,[83] is perceived by Lucius to be *matronatus* and to have come from a good family (4.23). The death of her husband, however, transforms her into a *bacchata* virago (8.6). Her ex-suitor, Thrasyllus, contemplates her with Tarquinian lust and thinks of her as a *mulier* ripe for the picking (8.7). After being visited by the spectre of her husband who informs her of his murder at the hands of Thrasyllus, Charite cunningly wards off the latter's advances, protesting that she is a *miserrima femina*, who needs more time to mourn (8.9). Feigning to submit to Thrasyllus' suit, Charite is termed a *fallaciosa mulier* as she fills his ears with promises that she never intends to keep (8.10). The episode is related in the idiom of *historia* (8.1), and the subsequent account of Charite's revenge is replete with feminine *topoi* that derive from historical prose.[84] The girl induces her nurse to ply Thrasyllus with blandishments and a soporific potion (8.11): *Tunc anus de iussu dominae blandiens ei furtim depromptis calicibus et oenophoro, quod immixtum vino soporiferum gerebat venenum*. Then, *masculis animis*, Charite utters an incantation over his drugged body, declaring that only after they are blinded will his eyes be pleasing *pudicae mulieri* (8.11-12). Invoking the furies, the *vaticinata mulier* jabs out Thrasyllus' eyes with a long hair-needle (8.13). The scene has built to a violent climax, and Charite's eloquent diatribe is delivered in "rhymes and rhythms" that emphasize its fury.[85]

The word *femina* is subtly employed as part of Charite's deception. Its respectability masks her true motives when she is dissembling before Thrasyllus. Lucius, however, as narrator, terms her a false *mulier*. The noun *mulier* is appropriate to the furor of the *vaticinatrix*; furthermore, it contributes to the rhythmic pattern of Charite's incantation.[86]

Psyche and her sisters are the daughters of kings (4.28); therefore they are properly termed *feminae*. As the sisters plot mischief against Psyche, they are *scelestae feminae* (5.12;15), and they call her *pessima femina* in turn (5.16). Note, however, the thrust of *mulier* when one of them, in a fit of jealousy, complains that Psyche, a mere *mulier*, acts as if she were

[83] B. Brotherton, "The introduction of characters by name in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius," CP (1934) 38.

[84] Walsh considers Charite's story to be in "deliberate contrast" to "the ethos of Petronius' widow of Ephesus." He also sees Catiline as Thrasyllus' literary forebear, and Dido as Charite's. The episode also recalls the rape of Lucretia, only in this case, "Lucretia" seems to have had a course in self-defense; and, in the current idiom, she "puts out 'Tarquin's' lights." (*supra*, n. 1) 164.

[85] Tatum notes Apuleius' fondness for poetic measures at the beginning and endings of sentences. He likens Charite's tirade to a coloratura aria of vengeance (*supra*, n. 26) 146-49.

[86] *Ibid.* 149.

a *dea*, commanding the winds as her hand-maidens (5.9). As *homo* is generally contrasted to *deus*,[87] so *mulier* is to *dea*; the latter also presents a greater contrast to the former than would *femina*. A similar contrast is implied when Psyche's predicted lover, an *extremus homo* despised of *Fortuna*, proves to be a *deus*.[88]

The *rustica squalentisque femina* (5.30), cited by Adams as evidence of degeneration of the term,[89] is not a woman at all, but Sobriety, a personification woven into the story with allegorical intent.[90] Venus may disparage *Sobrietas*, but she nevertheless intends to invoke the aid of her *inimica*; *femina* is a term of equality. Ceres, similarly, explains to Psyche that she does not wish to incur the displeaure of Venus, a *bona femina* or go against their *foedus antiquum* (6.3); *foedus* connotes a treaty between equals,[91] and Venus and Ceres are equal in rank. Juno, on the other hand, speaks as a sovereign when she appeals to the love goddess, invoking her maternal instincts: "*Mater autem tu et praeterea cordata mulier*" (5.31). A patron-client relationship seems to exist between the goddesses in which Juno's *augusta dignitas* (6.4) precedes that of her daughter-in-law Venus. Juno's use of *mulier* is consistent with her august stature when relating to an inferior.

The differences between *mulier* and *femina* are further illustrated when Lucius first encounters his foster aunt, Byrrhaena. Ignorant of her identity, Lucius describes her as *mulier quipiam*, attended by a large retinue; the words *aurum in gemmis et tunicis, ibi inflexum, hic intextum* reveal her to be a wealthy *matrona*. However, when Byrrhaena demands to know the reason for Lucius' silence, he answers: "*Vereor...ignotae mihi feminae!*" (2.2). Adams sees this to be a neutral instance of *femina*,[92] but the term's application is much more complex. On the surface, it is an expression of polite address to one of obviously high station: indeed, we are told later that Byrrhaena is a *primas femina* (2.19). The lady may be *ignota* and Lucius might think of her as a *mulier*, but nevertheless, to her face he calls her a *femina*, as he himself was addressed as *vir* by the stranger at the inn. There is, however, a more serious reason for polite address. Lucius has just heard a hair-raising tale about strange women who are witches. The aforementioned stranger had related the story of

[87] *V. supra*, chapter one, n. 32.
[88] Winkler (*supra*, n. 54) 90.
[89] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 238.
[90] Tatum, "The tales in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*," *TAPA* 100 (1969) 509.
[91] *OLD* (*supra*, n. 22) s.v. *foedus*.
[92] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 239.

the *anus* Meroe, whom he described as a *mulier*, a *potens...regina caupona* (1.8), and a *mulier* whose chief attribute is *saeva crudelitas* (1.14). Meroe is a *saga*, as capable of snuffing out the starlight as she is of transmogrifying unfaithful lovers into beavers (1.8; 9). When, in the *fabula*, Aristomenes refers to her as a *scortum scorteum* (in Scobie's words, a "stringy strumpet"),[93] his companion Socrates (upon whom Meroe later performs open-heart surgery) becomes extremely flustered. *Circumspiciens tutamenta sermonis*, he warns: "*Tace! Tace!...Parce...in feminam divinam! Ne quam tibi lingua intemperante noxam contrahas!*" (1.8).

Femina in this instance is not only the polite term but it is also an euphemism for what Meroe really is (1.8):

> Saga, inquit, et divina potens caelum deponere, terram suspendere, fontes durare, montes diluere, manes sublimare, deos infimare, sidera extinguere, Tartarum ipsum illuminare.

Saga—wise woman—itself is euphemistic.[94] In ancient times as well as in the middle ages, complimentary names were substituted for those that might annoy maleficent forces, in order to ward off evil.[95] Thus were the Furies renamed Eumenides by the Greeks, and in later centuries, were witches dubbed "good dames".[96] By calling Meroe a *femina*, Socrates is "speaking well" of her. The fact that his apotropaic formula does not work is irrelevant and only emphasizes the *saga*'s potency. There are also very probably euphemistic implications in Lucius' statement: "*Vereor ignotae mihi feminae*!" Apuleius' hero is fascinated with magic as well as being extremely credulous. He has only just heard of the horrific Meroe upon his entry into Thessalian Hypata, the habitat of witches.[97] He is therefore wary of strange women. The Meroe story serves as a harbinger for later events, and elements of such prognostications are repeated throughout the story.[98]

J.N. Adams maintains that *femina* had become debased "in the hands of Apuleius", who used it repeatedly "with uncomplimentary adjectives and without any implication that the woman in question belongs to the

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[93] Scobie (*supra*, n. 62) 97.

[94] According to Cicero, the verb *sagire* derives from *sentire acute*, *Div.* 1.31.65; E.E. Burris, "The terminology of witchcraft," *CP* 31 (1936) 128. By transferrence, a *saga* is one who senses things before they happen; cf. E. Massonneau, *La magie dans l'antiquité romaine* (Paris, 1934) 51.

[95] E. Clodd, *Magic in Names* (London, 1920) 88.

[96] *Ibid.* 238.

[97] Tatum (*supra*, n. 90) 522.

[98] Scobie (*supra*, n. 62) 100.

upper class."[99] Adams refers in particular to a series of adulterous murderous women[100] for whom Apuleius employs *femina* with pejorative adjectives. These include the baker's wife of whom Lucius fumes *nec enim vel unum vitium nequissimae illi feminae deerat* (9.14), and seethes over the *pessimae feminae flagitia* (9.15);[101] the "Phaedra" *noverca*, whom he denounces as *dira illa femina* (10.5), and whose son he decries as a *proprius pessimae feminae filius* (*Ib.*); and a condemned poisoner, whom he brands a *truculenta femina* (10.26) as well as a *scelesta pollutaque femina* (10.34).[102]

Issue must be taken with Adams' assessment. The word "debasement" implies indiscriminate choice of words. It furthermore does not allow for the variations in speech that the author employed. Tatum notes the care with which Apuleius chose his words, and remarks that the author took it for granted that his readers would absorb both the "substance of his prose" and its "wording and style."[103]

Adams, furthermore, omits to mention that Lucius has expressed his disdain for these women with the customary rhetoric, using *mulier* with pejoratives.[104] For instance, Lucius introduces the baker's wife as *talis illa mulier* (9.15); he later spies on her to observe *cunctas facinerosae mulieris artes* (9.22), and the outraged ass relates how the *procax et temeraria mulier* hypocritically denounces the fuller's wife as *illam perfidam, illam impudicam*, who has fouled her connubial nest *lupinari...infamia* (9.26). Lucius contrives to upset the former's applecart—or rather her tub—in order to reveal to the cuckolded baker the *scaenam propudiosae mulieris* (9.27). Similarly Lucius deplores the *noverca* as *mulier illa*, whose heart Bacchatus Amor renders *vesanum* (10.2), and he

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[99] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 238.

[100] Apuleius' women seem to have stepped out of a Ciceronian nightmare: practitioners of nocturnal religion, purveyors of witchcraft, murder by poison and carnal luxury, the *mulieres* of the *Metamorphoses* are personifications of Cicero's vituperation. Their insatiable appetites not only make an ass out of man, but also embroil him in endless trouble. Clearly, physical love must be set aside in the Platonic manner and exchanged for worship of a universal feminine, Isis Regina. Walsh (*supra*, n.1) 142; Brotherton, (*supra*, n. 83) 41; cf. van der Paardt, who believes that the work may be interpreted on many levels, an important one being symbolism (*supra* n. 34) 7. Winkler sees the tales of adultery to be a theme and variations (*supra*, n. 54) 15-16.

[101] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 238.

[102] Adams only quotes the Latin; the identifications are the words of the author of this study. Tatum considers the *noverca* a stock character of the Phaedra type (*supra*, n.26) 521.

[103] Tatum (*supra*, n. 26) 136. "Every page of the *Golden Ass* is a mosaic that sparkles with glittering metaphors, archaisms, and newly coined words; with phrases that scan and rhyme like verse..." (*Ib.*) 522.

[104] Adams (*supra*, n. 18) 238.

dips into a vat of vintage Ciceronian vitriol for the epithets with which he excoriates the condemned woman, who must copulate with him (as an ass) in the arena before being thrown to the beasts. Repeatedly called a *mulier*,[105] the hussy is, more specifically, *audax illa mulier* (10.26), *truculenta mulier* (10.26), and *crudelissima mulier* (10.28). Furthermore, Lucius agonizes lest the *scelerosae mulieris contagio* pollute him (10.29).

Why then does Apuleius interlard his stories with *femina* plus pejorative adjectives?[106] To attempt a hypothesis, it is necessary to return to an earlier episode where Apuleius uses *femina* with a laudatory superlative adjective. Lucius, in his human form, has just walked into Milo's kitchen where the lovely silken-tressed Photis is fluttering over a pot of stew, prompting the youth to wax eloquent upon the subject of hair *eximiae pulcherrimaeque feminae* which, he says, must never be cut (2.8). Photis is, as Scobie puts it, the Sorceress' apprentice,[107] and Lucius enlists her to help him gain Pamphile's secret for flying. She provides him with a jar of the *maga*'s magic ointment which he proceeds to smear all over his body. Unfortunately, Photis forgot to read the label, and, as Lucius sprouts ears, tail, and all the other accoutrements of a four-footed ass, he feels betrayed (3.26):

> Diu denique ac multum mecum ipse deliberavi an nequissimam facinerosissimamque illam feminam illam spissis calcibus feriens et mordicus appetens necare deberem.

Lucius has just been precipitated into an ambivalent nightmare world where no-one and nothing can be trusted. Everything is topsy-turvy.[108] As Tatum remarks, "nothing that is said, even by the narrator, can be taken at face value":[109] Lucius' *sermo* in particular is subject to semantic change and parody.[110] In such a distorted milieu, even the *feminae*, who are eternally *optimae* and *sanctissimae*, have suddenly become *pessimae*

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[105] 10.26 (*bis*); 27; 28; 29; 34 (*bis*).

[106] Adams is mistaken when he writes that there is no indication that the women come from the upper class (*supra*, n. 18) 238. The condemned woman is a *locuples femina* (10.27); her late husband spent his money *liberalissime* (10.23); "Phaedra's" husband is *dominus* of a large estate (10.2); the Baker is *dominus* of a plantation equipped with both domestic and field-slaves, work-animals and gear, all of which are sold at auction after his death (9.31). He and his wife are friends of the decurion, Barbarus and his wife, the *matrona nobilis* Arete (9.17; 18). Since provincial birth in Apuleius' day was an asset, rather than a liability, they represent solid municipal "respectability".

[107] A. Scobie, *Aspects of the Ancient Romance and its Heritage* (Meisenheim an Glan, 1969) 57.

[108] Tatum (*supra*, n. 26) 34.

[109] *Ibid.*, 21.

[110] Tatum, "Apuleius and metamorphosis," *AJ Phil* 93 (1972) 309.

and *nequissimae*. It is only after Lucius' metamorphosis that he begins to assess the character of others.[111] In his animal form, he can see human beings as they really are. It is as if the word *femina* itself has been metamorphosized and the truth behind the empty rhetoric of laudatory superlatives has been disclosed. As Scobie notes, Apuleius' language is "deliberately unusual";[112] besides revelling in alliteration, assonance and metrics,[113] he repeatedly indulges in oxymora, such as *regina caupona*.[114] In light of common Latin rhetorical usage, *pessima femina* and related expressions may be viewed as oxymoric.

Tatum notes Apuleius' passion for rhyming adjectives,[115] and cites a series of these, including *nequissimae illi feminae*, used to characterize the baker's wife. It should be noted that Apuleius (in the "persona" of Lucius the Ass) persistently applies *femina* with pejoratives in the dative or genitive singular: *nequissimae illi feminae* (9.14); *perditae feminae* (9.23); *deterrimae feminae* (9.26); *pessimae feminae* (10.5); *scelestae pollutaeque feminae* (10.34); *truculentae feminae* (10.26). The feminine genitive or dative singular endows each of these expressions with an uneven, almost sing-song effect. Tatum has demonstrated how Apuleius portrays Lucius-the-donkey's lurching gait in a "monotonous clippety clop of dactyls and rhymes of O."[116] The cretics of *pessimae feminae* or the bacchic/trochees of *scelestae pollutaeque feminae* and related expressions with their aye-ee-aye sounds, which Lucius reserves for women with whom he is infuriated, give the impression of a donkey's bellowing (One can almost picture him laying back his shaggy ears and baring his teeth.). It is perhaps significant that each of the women in question is an adulteress/poisoner, a type that was almost synonymous with witch in the ancient world.[117] Far from showing semantic degeneration, *femina* with pejoratives gives further evidence of Apuleius' subtle use of the language: in the mouth of the quadruped Lucius, it might represent nothing more than an apotropaic asinine bray!

Apuleius is obsessed with magic. He is a Roman Prospero whose rough enchantments are bent upon beguiling, until he abjures his charms and they melt into thin air, revealing the true light of Isis to his lectors:[118]

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[111] Scobie (*supra*, n. 107) 68.
[112] Scobie (*supra*, n. 62) 25.
[113] *Ibid.*, 21-25.
[114] *Ibid.*, 81.
[115] Tatum (*supra*, n. 26) 151-2.
[116] *Ibid.*, 150.
[117] Massoneau (*supra*, n. 94) 52-53.
[118] Wm. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act V, scene 1.

And as the morning steals upon the night,
Melting the darkness, so their rising senses
Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle
Their clearer reason.

Apuleius' sorcery goes beyond sheer narrative; like the poet whose verses are quoted above, who used the Roman's work as inspiration to transform another fool into an ass,[119] Apuleius' very words are implements of illusion which themselves contribute to the evanescent nature of the work.

It is a mistake to think in terms of linguistical degeneration in the case of Apuleius.[120] Such an estimation implies careless, thoughtless, or random utilization of vocabulary, and, as Tatum and others have demonstrated, every word written by Apuleius was carefully calculated for nuance and significance. "Degeneration" does not comply with Adams' own observation on the persistence of the upper class and aristocratic overtones that adhered to *femina* for some fifteen centuries.[121] Assumptions of disintegration seem to be based upon notions of "decline and fall" or "golden and silver" Latin, and imply that Apuleius, because of the times in which he lived, was in consequence an inferior rhetorician, whose written prose reflected his even less discriminating reading public—none of whom knew the difference between the terms *mulier* and *femina*. Apuleian scholarship stresses the author's meticulous use of language.[122] Furthermore, Apuleius' repeated employment of *mulier* with Ciceronian pejoratives for the women he calls *pessimae*, *nequissimae* and *scelestae feminae* proves that he was well aware of traditional invective. The singular usage of *femina* with pejoratives calls for another explanation: that Apuleius was striving for special effect. Just because gender terms were generally employed within a conventional framework does not mean that one could not expand those customary limits. Cicero was able to do this by turning *femina* into an insult for Clodia (*Cael.* 63), and *vir fortis ac strenuus* into contumely against Fufius (*Phil.* 8.11). But whereas the Republican orator utilized positive adjectives and relied upon a sarcastic context, Apuleius has resorted to the device that Tacitus used, of applying *femina* with pejorative adjectives when called for.[123] Degeneration is not even considered in the case of Tacitus.

[119] Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* G.& B. Lloyd Evans, *Everyman's Companion to Shakespeare* (London, 1978) 239.
[120] As Adams does (*supra*, n. 18) 238.
[121] *Ibid.*, 235-236.
[122] *v. supra*, p. 188; cf. Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 141.
[123] *v. supra*, chapter seven.

As Walsh reminds us:[124]

> [Apuleius was an] indefatigable traveller, precocious litterateur, popular philosopher interpreting Plato for Roman readers, professional advocate as the polish of his *Apology* demonstrates...[,] a non-political Cicero in the changed conditions of second-century western society.

Moreover, he was a "darling of the Roman Establishment", whose narrative reveals an ambivalent "tension between Milesian ribaldry and Platonist mysticism" as well as religious syncretism.[125] Apuleius' transformation of *femina* in certain cases may be bizarre, but then, it is no more so than the story of Lucius, a young man smitten with a *pulcherrima femina* and, consequently, transformed into an ass.

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[124] Walsh (*supra*, n. 1) 141.
[125] *Ibid.* 142-143.

CONCLUSION

Cicero's speeches best illustrate the rhetorical use of gender epithets. *Viri clarissimi* and *viri fortissimi*—paragons of the Senate and bulwarks of the Republic—abound in them, as do *viri praestantissimi* and other exemplars of the Roman oligarchy. Likewise, *feminae clarissimae* and *feminae primariae* materialize occasionally, if not as appendages of one of the above *viri*, then as friendly witnesses, or as victims of villains such as Verres, Clodius, or Antony, against whom the orator may currently be fulminating.

Homines and *mulieres* also get Cicero's attention. When the words are not used in their general or biological sense, they are applied in a positive but patronizing manner—often with the modifiers *splendidi* or *nobiles*—to the cream of municipal society or to the brighter (but not brilliant) lights of those realms beyond the confines of Italy. Cicero also employs *homines* to denote persons uninvolved in public life, such as *privati*, or learned authorities, who may be *sapientissimi* or *prudentissimi*. Although such expressions, including *homo moderatus* or *homo frugi*, may be used in a positive sense, the belittling remarks that often follow epithets of this nature, prove that Cicero can employ them as a form of mild invective. *Homo frugi*, in fact, is utilized in a letter to Atticus as an epithet of condescending praise for the freedman Dionysius upon whom Cicero also bestows a grudging compliment: "*Sit igitur sane bonus vir!*".

Since *homo* and *mulier* are traditionally applied to members of the lower classes, including slaves and freedmen, when used with pejorative adjectives, they become ideal instruments with which to degrade a member of the aristocracy, who would normally be termed a *vir* or a *femina*. This hypothesis is tested by the numerous pejorative adjectives used only with *homo* and *mulier*, and by the many positive modifiers employed solely with *vir* and *femina*. Ciceronian vituperation, in fact, reveals a plenitude of *homines audacissimi*, *sceleratissimi* and *nequissimi*. Epithets such as these are utilized persistently in the invective against Cicero's most unrelenting enemies, either in the courtroom, as with Verres, or in the Senate, as with Clodius, Piso, and Antony. Although the distaff side is less well represented, several women—namely Clodia and Sassia in the courtroom, and Fulvia in the political arena—are subjected to Cicero's most virulent verbal abuse. Defamatory epithets such as *mulier audax*, *mulier amens*, and *mulier crudelissima*—employed with

a large dose of "Bacchanalian" rhetoric—vilify the name of Cluentius' mother Sassia; denigrating appellations such as *mulier proterva*, *mulier procax*, and *mulier potens quadrantaria*—all steeped in sexual innuendo—stain the reputation of Clodia, the sister of Cicero's mortal *inimicus* Clodius; and, similarly the slanderous epithet *mulier avarissima* tarnishes the character of Fulvia, Antony's current wife, and characterizes her as a gold-digger. Likewise, a number of Sicilian women, such as Pipa, a *libidinosissima mulier*, and Tertia, a *mulier deterrima*, are given similar treatment in order to demonstrate Verres' guilt by association. Both *homo* and *mulier*, even when used without modifiers, can also convey negative nuances, because of repeated usage in pejorative epithets.

Ciceronian oratory cast a long shadow over the gender terminology employed in Latin prose. Since oratory was the cornerstone of Roman education, and historians were trained in rhetoric, the rhetorical uses of gender epithets are also apparent in Roman historiography. Cicero's contemporary, Sallust, for instance, reflects the orator's usage. The historian often employs his terms, however, from an opposite perspective: a person who is a *vir* with positive adjectives in Cicero's speeches may be represented as a *homo* with pejorative modifiers in Sallust's narrative, and conversely, a Ciceronian *homo* may be transformed into a Sallustian *vir*.

The political changes brought about by the transition from Republic to Empire had little effect upon the gender terms used in contemporary prose. Perhaps due to Augustus' emphasis upon moral reform, *vir* and *femina* retain their overtones of virtues traditionally associated with the aristocratic values of the Republic. This is illustrated by the iteration of *vir* with adjectives that had their origins in factional politics, such as *bonus* and *optimus*, used by Livy, Velleius and Pliny as well as Apuleius. One notes a similar phenomenon with *femina*, employed with adjectives of politically oriented praise such as *optima* and *sanctissima* in contexts of matronly *pudicitia*, examples of which are seen in the writings of Petronius, Pliny and Apuleius.

Because of their dichotomous connotations, gender epithets served a particularly useful purpose for Livy, whose history of Rome is based upon a series of moral episodes, and whose characters serve as *exempla* to illustrate the inherent virtues and vices of oligarchical society. The historical idiom, moreover, allowed the author of *Ab Urbe Condita* to work within a broader framework than that allotted by the political speech or the courtroom summation. Livy reflects Cicero's usage by

applying *vir* and *femina* to persons of status, as well as to those whom he deems to be acting in a morally acceptable manner, in particular, persons loyal to the Republic. Whereas the historian, like the orator, does use *homo* and *mulier* for those who are behaving reprehensibly, he sometimes retains the aristocratic terms *vir* and *femina* and employs the adjective *muliebris* to condemn bad comportment among the upper classes, a device also used by Tacitus. In addition, Livy has broached the topic of the "noble savage" *vir* and *femina*, who serve as *exempla* of pristine virtues, a *topos* to be exploited fully by Tacitus in *Germania*.

The demise of the Roman Republic and the advent of the Empire brought an end to factional politics. Consequently Ciceronian anti-tribunician rhetoric with its transparently political gender epithets became largely a thing of the past. Thus tribunes of the plebs, who in Cicero's speeches were usually *homines audaces*, *facinerosi*, etc., in Livy's history, become *viri impigri*, *strenui*, or *acres*. The historian, unlike the orator, has no need to defame them. A change can likewise be seen in the epithets used by Velleius Paterculus. Although he employs *vir* and *femina* traditionally to indicate the important personages who shaped Roman history, all of whom may be placed in the upper echelons of society, he reserves *homo* with pejoratives in the traditional Ciceronian fashion for only Clodius and Curio, and for those odious individuals deemed to have excelled in trangressions against the Imperial family: Aemilius Lepidus and M. Lollius. Velleius, like Livy and later Tacitus, makes use of the "noble savage" theme. As Livy used *vir* to magnify the stature of the Carthaginians Hannibal and Hasdrubal in order to dramatize the victories of Marcellus and Scipio, so Velleius employs *vir* to amplify the military prowess of the German Maroboduus in order to heighten the triumph of Tiberius. Velleius' repeated use of *vir* in apposition to a character's name thereby imbues his compendium of Roman history with the pungent essence of panegyric.

The Flavian era brought a recrudescence of Ciceronian rhetoric. Consequently, a revival of epithets as used by the Republican orator is evident in the letters of Pliny, the biographies of Suetonius, and in the early works of Tacitus, which reflect Livian elements as well. *Vir* and *femina* preserve their aristocratic moral nuances, and are employed by Tacitus and Suetonius especially to emphasize Julio-Claudian oppression of the aristocracy.

It is in the *Annales* that Tacitus reaches beyond what have become stale gender epithets. Since he is primarily concerned with *viri* and *feminae* of the nobility, he refrains from employing *homo* pejoratively;

likewise, he uses *mulier* in pejorative contexts only for rare effect. Tacitus prefers the Livian device of branding the nobility's bad behaviour as *muliebris*. Nevertheless, the historian does use *mulier* in a pejorative context for several women who are *exempla* of *impudicitia*. *Mulier* is a key-word of innuendo for Poppaea, Pontia, Satria Galla, and the younger Agrippina; it therefore indicates Tacitus' opinion in no uncertain terms. Conversely, *femina* expresses Tacitean approval for the bravery of the freedwoman Epicharis. Rare use renders the device particularly effective. By verbal and linguistical artistry, Tacitus has broken the Ciceronian tradition. Because they are skillfully woven into the narrative, Tacitus' gender terms are no longer trite labels; rather the words *mulier* and *femina* have become integral components of characterization.

Both oratorical and historiographical traditions are evident in the gender terms used by the novelists, Petronius and Apuleius. Petronius, who confines the word *vir* (in its sense of 'man') to Trimalchio in order to illustrate his ostentation, uses *homo* and *mulier* with traditional Ciceronian pejoratives, and employs *femina* to illustrate the notable *pudicitia*—as long as it lasts—of the Widow of Ephesus. Apuleius, who was particularly adept in Ciceronian oratory, likewise uses terms reminiscent of his Republican predecessor. Furthermore, despite the highly unusual nature of his prose, said to mirror his theme of metamorphoses, Apuleius' gender terms, thanks to the static nature of Roman oratory, reflect traditional social and moral implications, and demonstrate little change from Cicero's era. The novelist, however, in his own way, is as artful with his epithets as was Tacitus, sometimes employing *femina* as a trope to illustrate the exact opposite of its conventional connotations. Since Apuleius demonstrates that he is very much at home using *mulier* with choice Ciceronian pejoratives, his employment of *femina* with negative modifiers, of adulterous poisoners, is done for special effect, in keeping with the protagonist's upside-down world where even *feminae*—traditionally *sanctissimae*—are *nequissimae*.

Throughout Latin prose *vir* and *femina* continue to be employed in apposition to laudatory adjectives such as *clarissimus/a* and *inlustris*, to signify members of the senatorial order.[1] Such epithets often seem insincere in Cicero's speeches, as if they constituted quasi-arbitrary

[1] Other laudatory adjectives used exclusively for the aristocracy include *consularis*, *insignis*, *praeclarus/a*, *praestantissimus/a*, and *primarius/a*, and *primoris*.

titles, particularly when applied to magistrates.[2] The persistence of traditional aristocratic moral themes is demonstrated in epigraphy, on inscriptions such as that of Fl. Merobaudius, a member of the sacred *consistorium* in 435 A.D., noted to have been *aeque fortis et doctus vir*, as well as *vir antiquae nobilitatis, novae gloriae* (*CIL* 6.1724); well-worn *topoi* are also evident in the commemoration of the magisterial career of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, which refers to the Republic as if it were still in operation, lauding time-worn republican decorum; noting that the *nomen viri Agori* is *decus* (*CIL* 6.1779). Accustomed ideals of matronly fruitfulness are seen in the tombstone of Fabia Fuscinilla, *clarissima et omnium virtutum fecundissima femina*, who, though she had not yet completed her 24th year, was, nevertheless, noted to have been *univira* (*CIL* 6.31711); and chastity and fidelity remain salient aristocratic virtues when Caecilius Candidianus, *V.P.* (*vir praestantissimus*) remembers Aurelia Iusta, *C.M.F.* (*clarissimae memoriae femina*) with whom he lived 31 years, as *unici exempli adque* (sic) *egregiae castitatis femina* (*CIL* 6.31955), demonstrating that the tombstone rhetoric—mocked by Petronius in his presentation of the wayward Widow of Ephesus, *singularis exempli femina* (*Sat.* 111), and parodied by Apuleius in his one-dimensional portrait of the syrupy Plotina, *rarae fidei atque singularis pudicitiae femina* (*Met.* 7.6)—had not changed.[3]

The humble connotations of *homo* and *mulier*, as found in Latin prose, are mirrored in the epigraphy of the city of Rome, revealing that almost all sepulchral inscriptions employing *homo* as an epithet belong to

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[2] Emptiness of the terms is reflected in epigraphy, where *clarissimus* and *inlustris vir* become titles, *sine qua non*, in post-Diocletianic Rome; their perfunctory nature is indicated by abridgement to *V.C* and *INL. V.*, initials customarily appended to the names of urban prefects and consuls. E.g., *CIL* 6.1664: SIMULACRUM MINERBAE/ ABOLENDO INCENDIO/ TUMULTUS CIVILIS IGNI/ TECTO CADENTE CONFRACTUM/ ANICIUS ACILIUS AGINATIUS/ FAUSTUS VC * ET * INL.* PRAEF * URBI/ VIC * SAC * IUD * IN MELIUS/ INTEGRO PROVISO PRO/ BEATITUDINE. TEMPORIS. RESTITUIT. Almost every inscription cited for post-Diocletianic magistrates uses *V.C.* or *INL.V.*: *CIL* 6, pp. 356-405. *Clarissima femina* is also abbreviated to *C.F.* upon tombstones of women of the senatorial order after Diocletian. e.g. *CIL* 6^1. 1458; 1461; 1469; 1470; 1478; 1519; 1525; 1536. The sterility of *V.C.* and *C.F.* is further illustrated by the fact that gender terms upon Roman tombstones progressively become more elaborate and baroque, especially as the names of the deceased become more foreign: e.g., an epitaph of the daughter of Narses, *vir excellentissimus Patricius* (*CIL* 6. 32021); and a commemorative inscription of that general's victory over the Goths in 565 A.D., where he is termed *vir gloriosissimus* (*CIL* 6.1199), a title that has come a long way from the *vir fortissimus* of Cicero's day. One sees a similar taste for the elaborate in the title *honorifica femina*, itself abbreviated to *H.F.* on the statue base of a priestess of Dea Virgo Caelestis (*praestantissimum numen* of Mons Tarpeius) (*CIL* 6.37170).

[3] On a tombstone of 395 A.D. Hermogenianus Ulybrius, *V.C.* and *consul ordinarius*, recalls Anicia Faltonia as an *inlustrissima et sanctissima castissima femina* (6.1756).

members of the lower orders, particularly slaves and freedmen.[4] And the same is true of those that employ *mulier* in apposition.[5] Significantly, *homo* becomes synonymous with vassal in Mediaeval Latin, in which the word denoting the homage or fealty due to a feudal lord is *hominium*.[6]

It is important to distinguish between gender terms in the interests of clarity. An example is Livy's statement upon fetial law, where the priest enters enemy territory and delivers his ultimatum to the first *vir* he meets (1.32.8); or Suetonius' explanation of Augustus' sanctions against *feminae* at the amphitheatre (*Aug.* 44).

A clear understanding of the rhetorical applications of gender terms grants insight into an author's intentions or bias. This is illustrated in Cicero's use of *vir* or *femina* as instruments of flattery; or of the former noun to characterize tribunes and others whom he deems to be favourably disposed towards him and his cause. He furthermore employs

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[4] Evidence is drawn from inscriptions found in the city of Rome: *CIL* 6: 8467: T. Fl. Aug. lib. Epagathus, the *vir* (husband) of Aelia Plusia was a *homo optimus et indulgentissimus*; 9384: Sex. Cornelius Vitalio, *exonerator calcarius*, was a *homo dulcissimus*; 9545: G. Ateilius Serrani l. Euhodus, *margaritarius*, was a *homo bonus*; 9989: the *domina* of Sabinianus, a *vilicus*, honours him as a *homo bonus*; 13109: L. Aurelius Fortunatus, a *nectarius*: *homo dignissimus*; 14799: C. Cicereius Secundus l. is a *homo infelicissimus* who misses his *puella*; 14487: Cassius: *homo bonus*; 14978: Ti. Claudius Aug. l. Coeranus: *homo sanctus*; 14887: Claudius: *homo optimus*; 15298: Ti. Clau. Trophimus, *homo optimus* was the *conlibertus* of Ti. Claudius Calocaerus, *homo dulcissimus*; 17104: An unnamed *domina*, Egnatia, commemorates Q. EgnatiusƆ.l. Pollio: *Qui se hominem meminit securo pectore vivat. Nam meus libertus/ hic iacet in tumulo*; 17308: Eucarus was a *homo optimus*, whose single name suggests servile origins: H. Thylander, *Étude sur l'épigraphie latine* (Lund, 1952) 57 ; 22659: C. Munatius Eustomus commemorates C. Munatius Felix, his *conlibertus*, as a *homo optimus*; 22747: Onesimus: *homo optimus*; 26044: L.l. Scurra: *homo —ssimus*; 27448: Titedia remembers her *coniunx* L. Titedius Fortunatianus as *homo rarae innocentiae*. The husband and wife have the same *nomen*, revealing them to be *conliberti* from the same slave family: L.R. Taylor, "Freedmen and freeborn in the epitaphs of imperial Rome," *AJP* 92.2 (1961) 123. The following four epitaphs are of probable servile origin: 13112: Aur. Gelasius, a ten-month old baby: *homo innocentissimus*; 15231: Flavia Primitiva recalls Ti.Claudius Proclus as a *homo bonus*; 23890: Vibia Sabina remembers C. Pedus Iunianus as a *homo probissimus*. There is only one inscription employing *homo* which commemorates a demonstrably freeborn person: 6.28422: C. Veius T.f. Mai: *homo frugi*.

[5] The following inscriptions from *CIL* 6 use *mulier* in apposition: 13084: Aur. Augg. lib. Epictetus remembers his mother Valeria Capitolina as *dulcissima mulier et incomparabilis*; 20395: Iulius Callimorphus calls his *uxor* Iulia Beronice *mulier incomparabilis*, which he enhances with *rarissima femina*; 35037: A. Cornelius Pumidius Magnus honours his *nutrix*, Pumidia Attica, as *mulier optima*; 37811a: Procula, *ornatrix* of Magna Julia: *mulier incomparabilis*; 38645: Mummia: *mulier miserrima*. The following inscriptions use *mulier* as wife and also demonstrate servile orgins: 4776: Julia Bolae l. Glycera, Dardani Ti. Caesaris Aug. et Augustae ser. Archeliani, *mulier*; 19269: Chaereas recalls Helvia Civitas as his *mulier fidelissima*; 19448: T. Heterenus T.l. Hospes set up an inscription for Lezbia, *mulier sua*; 28687: M. Vettius M.l. Surus made one for Vettia M.l. Callistene, *mulier mea*; 33195: L. Flavius L.l. Hilaris recalls Tryphaena, *mulier sua*.

[6] K. Strecker, *Einführung in das Mittellatein*, tr. & rev. by R.B. Palmer (Berlin, 1957) 51.

femina in contexts intended to elicit the sympathy of the senator or juror.

Conversely, one must recognize the full pejorative potential of *homo* and *mulier*, used with negative adjectives never applied to *vir* and *femina*—particularly when the terms are administered with a dose of Bacchanalian rhetoric. Acknowledgment and appreciation of bacchic themes reveals the strategic use and the questionable accuracy of the terms when used in conjunction with characterizations of persons such as Cicero's Sassia, Clodia and Clodius, and Tacitus' Agrippina and Poppaea.

There are no written rules for the use of gender terms. Cicero offers no insight in his rhetorical treatises on how to upgrade one's clients-at-the-bar or laud one's political *amici* with *vir* plus chosen laudatory adjectives (or *femina* in the case of said clients' or politicians' wives and female members of the family); nor does he present any handy hints on how to demolish witnesses for the opposition or to annhilate one's political enemies by application of *homo* or *mulier* plus selected pejorative modifiers. Likewise, one searches the works of Quintilian in vain for relevant information on the subject.[7]

This absence of explicit rules suggests that the positive overtones of *vir* and *femina* and the *negative* nuances of *homo* and *mulier* were taken for granted in oratory; that since *vir* and *femina* were words that pertained to the aristocracy, they were naturally imbued with overtones of moral excellence; and that since *homo* and *mulier* were appropriate to the servile and foreign elements of society, the words were consequently steeped in degradation. Despite the silence of the sources on the subject, the persistent use of *vir* and *femina* with laudatory modifiers, and the employment of *homo* and *mulier* with adjectives of abuse, strongly indicates that such usage was indeed implicit in the language and may well have been tacitly understood to be part of the *arcana* of the effective orator.

We would do well to consider fully the many connotations of masculine and feminine terminology in our interpretive readings of Latin prose. These gender terms imply clear demarcations according to social class as well as moral quality; they are used, often in the context of stock rhetorical *topoi*, as epithets or devices of emphasis, not only in oratory but also in the prose of the late Republic and early Empire.

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[7] The closest Quintilian comes to the subject is with an enigmatic sentence that is long on nouns and short on copulae: *Quando homo hostis homo*, which could be rendered: *Quando homo est hostis, hostis est homo* (*Inst.* Orat 9.3.67). Quintilian presents this as a form of *geminatio*, by which a word, repeated the second time, takes on additional emphasis.

Whether gender epithets are employed with the obviousness of Cicero and Suetonius, or with the subtlety of Tacitus and Apuleius, they are always replete with significance.

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INDEX

Adams, J.N., 5, 34, 38, 78, 94, 124, 181, 190, 191-92, 195
Alfonsi, L., 104
androphron gyne, 87, 116
Apuleius—*Metamorphoses*, 172; 184-196
  characters: Aristomenes, 186-187, 191; Bacchatus Amor, 192; Baker's Wife, 192, 194; Byrrhaena, 190; Ceres, 190; Charite, 189; Chryseros, 185; Demochares, 187; Haemus, 186, 189; Juno, 190; Lamachus, 185-86; Lucius, 187, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193-94; Meroe, 190-91; Milo, 184, 187, 193; Pamphile, 184, 193; "Phaedra" *noverca*, 192, 194; Photis, 184, 193; condemned poisoner, 192-93, 194; priests of the Syrian Goddess, 187; priest of Isis, 187; Psyche, 189-90; robbers, 185-86; Sobriety, 190; Socrates, 186, 191; Venus, 190; Thrasyllus, 189
  Homer, 187
  Isis, cult of, 187, 194-95
  magic, 191, 193
  rhetoric: bacchanalian, 185, 189; blandishments, 185, 189; Ciceronian rhetoric, 184-85, 193; euphemisms, 190-91; *femina* with pejorative adjectives, 192-94; *historia*, language of, 189; *mulier* with pejorative adjectives, 193; *regina caupona*, 194; rhyming adjectives, 194; *scortum scorteum*, 191; *vaticinata mulier*, 189; *vecors*, 185; *vesanus*, 185; *vir strenuus*, 186; *virtus*, parody on, 185-86
  "Tale of the Tub", 186
  witches, 190-91, 193, 194
  women, 188-96
audax, 22
audience, determines orator's choice of gender terms, 25, 54-55
Aventine Hill, 92
Axelson, B., 4, 101

Bacchanalian Conspiracy, 90-93, 95-98
bacchantes, 90-93
Balsdon, J.P.V.D, 82, 91, 176
Baldwin, B., 166
blandiens, 189
blandimenta, 44, 138, 141
blanditiae, 21, 82, 83, 88, 89, 185
Buechner, K., 53, 59

carpentum, and privileges granted to Tanaquil, Agrippina and Messalina, 133, n. 48
[Cicero] *Ad C. Herennium de ratione dicendi*, 41-42, n. 36; *translatio criminis*, 43-44
Cicero, 1, 3, 9-46, 47, 49, 50, 53, 54-55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 68, 74, 75, 80, 83, 85, 86, 98, 99, 101, 102, 107, 108, 120, 121, 139, 140, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 153, 156, 157, 158, 164, 168, 171, 173, 174, 184, 185, 196, 197-198, 199, 200, 202, 203, 204
  Catilinarian Conspiracy, 14, 22, 25, 26
  Cicero's downfall, equated with funeral of Roman Republic, 15
  men: consulars: Aemilius Scaurus, 49, 59; Caecilius Metellus Celer, 44; Caecilius Metellus Pius, 12, 18; Calpurnius Bestia, 49, 59; Calpurnius Bibulus, 12; Appius Claudius' Ghost, 45; Claudius Marcellus, 33, 38; Claudius Pulcher, Ap., 19; Cornelius Sulla, 13; Domitius Ahenobarbus, 34, 39; Hortensius, 12, 25; 157, n. 49; Julius Caesar, G., 13, 20; Julius Caesar, L., 14, 35; Licinius Crassus, M., 12, 34; Licinius Crassus, P., 12; Licinius Murena, 13; Marcius Philippus, 38; Pompey, 12-13, 21; Servilius Isauricus, 15
    enemies, political or courtroom: Antony, 9, 10, 17, 22, 25, 26, 27, 37-38, 40, 41; Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, 20, 25, 26, 27; Clodius, 15, 21, 22, 23-25, 26, 27, 107, Bona Dea scandal, 23-24, 36, incest with Clodia, 23, effeminatisation of Clodius, 24; Gabinius, 19, 26, *amator* of Catiline, 23; Sergius Catilina, 22, 23, 25; Vatinius, 34; Verres, 19, 25-26, 37, 38-40
    foreigners: bias against, 20, 36; Albucius, *Graecus homo*, 20; Brogitarus, 20; Cleophantus, 20; Deiotarus, 20; Duris of Samos, 20; *Gaditani*, 20; *Galli*, 20; *Graeci*, 20; Idutiomarus, 36; Scato, 20; Themistocles, 20; *Semiplacentius*, 20; *Siculi*, 20;
    freedmen: Cossinius Anchialus, 16; Fadius, 17; Mallius Glaucia, 17;

Phania, 16; Tullius Dionysius, 17-18
learned authorities: Manlius Torquatus, 18, Lutatius Catulus, 18, Mucius Scaevola, 18
praetors: Attius Balbus, 38; Flaccus and Pomptinus, 14, 56;
provincials: Aebutius, 36-37; Ambivius, 17; Cluentius, 17, 19, 42; Capuans, 19; Fabricius, G. & L., 19; Fonteius, 18, 36; Roscius, Sex., 19; Sittius, 13
tribunes: 21-22; comparison with Livy's portrayals, 63; Appuleius Saturninus, 28; Cispius, 15; Fabricius, 15; Fannius, 21-22; Gracchus, C., 28; the Gracchi, 55, 108; Labienus, 21, 28, 75; Memmius, inferior orator, 55; Ninnius Quadratus, 15; Quinctius, L., 21; Sestius, L. 15, 18, Sestius L.f, 18
"tyrannicides": Annius Milo, 14-15; Iunius Brutus, 14; Marius, 15; Opimius, 15, 49, 59; Scipio Nasica, 14, 15; Servilius Ahala, 15; Tullius Cicero, 15
other Romans: Fulvius Bambalio, father of Fulvia, 41; Caelius, 43-44; Gellius, 15, Laenius Flaccus, 15, Pomponius Atticus, 13, 17-18, 34; Scipio Gn. f., welcomes *Magna Mater*, 35
places: Aricia, 38; Milvian Bridge, 17; Tusculum, 38; Via Latina, 17
rhetoric: and audience, 28, 55; bacchanalian, 24-25; *coniuratio*, rhetoric of, 45-46, 75; gender epithets: and hyperbole, 9; redundancy of, 9-10; Greek prototypes, 27-28
masculine epithets; *homo* with pejorative adjectives, 10, 21-28; adjectives used with homo: *adulescens*, 27; *agrestis*, 16; *amens*, 24; *Arpinas*, 19; *audax*, 22, 27; *avarus*, 27; *avarissimus et libidinosissimus*, 25; *barbarus*, 20; *detestabilis*, 26; *effeminatus*, 22; *egens*, 27; *facinerosus*, 23; *furibundus*, 21, 22; *Graecus...ac levis*, 20; *improbus*, 26; *impurus...ac levis*, 20; *inimicus*, 27; *libertinus*, 16-17; *nequissimus*, 26; *nocentissimus pecuniosissimusque*, 25; *novus*, 11; *pecuniosus*, 25; *perditissimus atque alienissimus*, 25, 26; *popularis*, 21-22, 28; *privatus*, 11; *profligatus*, 26; *sanctus et diligens*, used as trope, 19; *sceleratus*, 26; *seditiosissimus*, 28; *servus*, 16; *simplex*, 26; *stupidus*, 26; *symphoniacus*, 17; *timidus*, 25; *turpissimus*, 24, 26; *vaesanus ac furiosus*, 24; *unus vir*, 23; *vir*, contrasted with *homo*, 23; *vir bonus*, 10-11; *vir fortissimus*, 13-14; *vir primarius*, 11-12; *vir*, with sexual innuendo, 23, 24; *vir* used as trope, 23
vocabulary: *acer*, 55, *lautus*, 174; *popularis consul*, 28
women: 29-46; *exempla*: 35-36; expected to put Republic before family, 35; Antonia, first wife of Antony, 37-38; Attia, mother of Octavian, 38; Caecilia Metella, 35; Caesennia, 36; Claudia Quinta, 35; mother of Claudius Marcellus, 33-34; mother of Domitius Ahenobarbus, 34; Fonteia, 36; Julia, *Caesaris soror*, 35; Junia, wife of Marcellus, 34; wife of Crassus, 34; Terentia, 35; Tullia, 34; Vestals, 36
enemies, political or courtroom: Clodia, 23; 40-41, 43-45; masculinization of, 23; Fulvia, 40, 41; Sassia, 40-41, 43-45
freedwomen: Agonis, 39
feminine gender terms: *libidinem muliebrem*, 46; *ista mulier*, 44; *matrona*, Cicero's rare use of word, 33, n. 15; *miserae mulieris fecunditas calamitosa*, 26; *mulier potens*, 23; *mulier* synonymous with *uxor* and female members of family, 34-35; *mulier*, term of abuse, 40-46; *nobilissimae feminae*, expose Clodius, 36
rhetoric: bacchanalian, 42-43, 45, 46; Feminine *topoi*: maenads, 45; *meretrix*, 41, 44; *meretrix* and the *adulescens*, 41, 44-45; nocturnal cults, 43, 45; unchaste poisoners, 41
Sicilians: Callidama, 39; Chelidon, 39; Lamia, 39; Pipa, 39-40; Tertia, 40
works: *De Legibus*, 36; *Pro Caelio*, 40; *Pro Cluentio*, 40, 43; *Pro Quinctio*, 18, *Philippics*, 25, 37, 40; *Verrine Orations*, 19, 38, 40; second actio, 25-26, 37
Claudia Pulchra, 112-13
Cleopatra, 88, 117

Demosthenes, 27-28, gender epithets: *andres Athenaioi*, 28, *anthropos*, 27; *hanthropos*,

27; men: Aeschines, 27; Aristogeiton, 27
discurrere and *procurrere*, as pejoratives in characterisation of women, 85, 90, 176
Duckworth, G.E., 33

Earl, D.C., 47, 56

flaminiana ostenta, 113
Flaminius, G., 113

Geffcken, K., 23, 24, 44, 45, 46
Gilbert, W.S., 2
Gruen, E.S., 15, 104, 109

Hanson, J.A., 32
Hellegouarc'h, J., 100, 109
Helen, 88, 115
Hermann, C., 95
historiography: and gender terms, 63; Thucydidean tradition, 47-48, 63
history, ancient: *exempla*, 100; the rhetorical nature of, 2-3, 100
Horace, 88

imitatio, 101
ingeniosus, 28, 107-09, 155-57

Jocelyn, H.D., 5, 16
juxtaposition, as device of innuendo, 50

Kennedy, G., 25
Kinsey, T.E., 18
Koestermann, E., 49

lautus, 174
libertae, 31, 33 n.13, 39, 91-93, 136-37, 165-66; 175-78, 202 nn.4 & 5; marriage with *vir ingenuus*, 93
Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 63-99
  characterization, two-dimensional nature of, 63
  cults, foreign: 89-99; *sacrificuli ac vates*, 90; *S.C de bacchanalibus*, 98
  historiography, 63, polarization of moral values, 63; and Thucydides, 63
  men: 63-76; consulars: Aelius Paetus, 65; Cato the Elder, 64, 95; Claudius Nero, 65, 94; Fabius Maximus, 66-67; Fulvius Flaccus, 68; Livius Salinator, 65; Menenius Agrippa, 65; Minucius, 64; Postumius Albinus, 91, 97; Scipio Nasica, 64; Scipio Africanus, 64, 73, 86-87; Scipio Asiaticus, 65; Terentius Varro, 69
    non-Romans: Abelux, 73, 74; Adranadorus, tyrant of Syracuse, 89, 116; Alexander the Great, 79-80; Alexander, *princeps Aetolorum*, 72; Antigonus Doson, 72; Arcas, 71; Archimedes, 71; Asians, effeminacy of, 80; Attalus of Pergamum, 72; Badius and Bantius, Campanians, 67; Bostar, 73; Cleomenes of Sparta, 72; Cycliadas, Achaian exile, 72; Decius Magius, 75; Eupolemus and Hypatan exiles, 71; Evander, 70; Hannibal, 68, 71-72, 73, 75, 87, 90; Ismenias of Thebes, 72; Lucumo (Tarquinius Priscus), 82, 88, 89; Masinissa, 73; Mazaetullus, 87; Moagetes, tyrant of Cibyra, 74; Pacuvius Calavius, Campanian, 74-75; Philip V, 72, 87; Servius Tullius, 66, 89; Tarquinius, Sex., 66, 82; Taurea Vibellius, Capuan senator, 68; Timastheus, 73; Vettius Messius, Volscian, 69
    plebeians: Aebutius, 91, 93, 97; Albinius, *plebis homo*, 70-71, Latinius, *de plebe homo*, 71, n, 27; plebeian aristocracy, involved in Bacchanalian affair, 95, 97; Cerrinius, Herrenius & Minius, 97, 98; tribunes, 65-66, comparison with Ciceronian portrayals, 66; Laetorius, 68, n. 18; Valerius Tappo, 64
    Romans, other: Brutus, founder of Republic, 66, 84; Coriolanus, 84; Curtius, *devotio* of, 94; *flamen Quirinalis*, 70; Flamininus, 88; Marcius Phillipus, 74; Otacilius, 67; Postumius Regillensis, 74, Scipio, Gn. f. and *Magna Mater*, 65; Romulus, 68; Turnus Herdonius, 66; Verginius, centurion at Algidus, 69
obituaries: Camillus, Scipio, Marius, and Cicero, 72, n. 31
places: Aventine hill, 92; Cannae, battle of, 67, 69; Forum Boarium, 70, Janiculum, 70, Pons Sublicius, 70, Ticinus, battle of, 68; Trasimennus, battle of, 94
religion, state: 70-71, 89; Fetial law, 76; *Magna Mater*, 65
rhetoric: attributes, moral, 63: courage, 66-67, courage as compensation for humble birth, 69; Bacchanalian, 96; catchwords, political: moderation and prudence, 65; Cicero, 74-75, 98; humour, 66-67; invective, Ciceronian, 66, 74-75, 76; orations, Livian verisimilitude in presentation, 64
  male gender epithets: and factional

politics, 65-66; historiographical idiom, effect on, 63; *homo*, humble term, 63 69-70; for foreigners, 63, 71; as term of abuse, 63, 73-76, plebs, 70-71; *homo militaris*, 68; *homo peregrinus* contrasted to *vir peregrinus*, 71-72; moral qualifications: disloyalty to Rome, 73-75, *fides* to Rome, 73-75, patriotism, 73-75; *robur virorum*, 68; *unus homo*, 71, *unus vir*, 69; *vir*, aristocratic term, 64-65; *vir acer*, 65-66; *vir clarissimus*, possible official epithet, 64; *vir et gubernator*, 67; *vir fortis ac strenuus*, 65-66, *vir fortissimus*, 68-69; *vir militaris*, 67-68; *vir prudens*, 73; *vir unus*, 73-74; *viri mulieresque* and *vir feminaeque*, 94-99

women: 77-99; Aebutia, 93; Busa, *mulier Canusina* and *m. Apula*, 86, 126; Cloelia, 77, 78, and Mucius Scaevola, 79; Damarata, 89, 116; Duronia, 93, 97; Helen, 88; Hispala Faecinia, 90-93, 96-97; origins of name, 91, marriage of *libertina* with *vir ingenuus*, 93, recruited into cult as *ancilla*, 96; Lavinia, 81; Lucretia, 66, 77, 82; *Mandonii uxor*, 86-87; *Mazatulli uxor*, 87; *matronae*, 79; *mulier Campana*, 88; *Nabidis uxor*, 87; Paculla Annia, Campanian priestess, 97, 179; Sabine women, 82; Sophoniba, 77; Tanaquil, 66, 77, 82, 88, 89-90; Theoxena, 87-88; Tullia, 77, 89, 94, murder of Servius Tullius, 78-79; Verginia, 77, 84; Verginia, patrician, 79; Veturia, 84; Volumnia, 84

feminine portrayals, 77, 114

Lex Oppia, 95

rape 82, fear of in wartime, 87

religion: bacchanalian conspiracy, and women: 90-93, 97-99; subordinate role of women in state religion, 89; Vestal Virgins, 70; *Fortuna Muliebris*, temple of, 84; Patrician and Plebeian *Pudicitia*, temple of, 79

rhetoric: catchwords relating to women: *blanditiae*, 82, as characteristic of women, 88, 89; feminine gender words: *femina*, as editorial word, 78-80; *ferox femina*, 88; *matrona*, 91; *mulier* as term of abuse, 80; *muliercula*, 88; *muliebria consilia*, 89, 116; *muliebris*, 77, 78, 80-83, 88, 89; *peregrina mulier*, 88; *procurrere* and *discurrere*, 85; *scortum nobile*, 91-92; word-order to indicate feminine guilt, 97

stereotypes: 138; bacchantes, 90-93; barbarians, 86; crowds, 83-85, 90; divination, 89; fear, 82, 85; *femina* as term of abuse for soldiers, 79-80; foreigners, 86-89; foreign cults, 89-93; helpless *femina*, 85-86; *meretrix* and the *adulescens*, 90-91; nocturnal sacrifices, 92, 97; tears, 83-85, 91; mourning, 84; tragic chorus, 83; *univira*, 87

Lollia Paulina, 111

Marbach, A., 183

Martin, R., 142-43

matrona, Cicero's rare use of word, 33, n. 15

Muellendorf, K., 125, 128

mulier, used to include all female members of family, 33; in vocative, as rude address, 30, 45

multitudo, as term of disparagement, 21

Nisbet, R.G.M., 21, 37

North, J.A., 96

Ogilvie, R.M., 74, 83, 92-93

Opelt, I., 9-10, 164

perditus and *coniuratio*, 75

Petronius—33, trained in rhetoric, 173; *Satyricon*, 172-84

characters: Ancilla to Widow, 183; Chrysanthus, 173; Chrysis, 181; Circe, 180, 181-82; Encolpius, 173, 174, 175, 176, 179, 180-81; Eumolpus, 180, 182, 183, 184; Fortunata, 176-77; Giton, 179; Glyco, 174; Lichas, 181; the *Miles*, 183-84; Pannychis, 179; Quartilla, 173, 178-80, as Campanian priestess, 179; Scintilla, 176, 177; Seleucus, 175; 177; Tryphaena, 180-81; Widow of Ephesus, 140, 182-84

characterisation: transformation of gender roles, 184

Priapus, cult of, 178-79; goose, 178-9

rhetoric: eulogistic, 182-84; historical and epic prose, evocation of, 172; 179-80, 181-82, 183; *muliercula*, 183

women, 175-84

Plautus, 30-33, *Amphitrio*, Mercury, Juppiter, and Alcumena, 31, 32, Bromia, 32; *Aulularia*, 31, Eunomia and Megadorus, 31; *Bacchides*, 45, 91, Bacchises and Pistoclerus, 45, *meretrix* and *adulescens*, 45, *nox*, *vinum*, and *mulieres*, 45; *Cistellaria*, 30-31, Lampadio, Phanostrata, and Halisca,

30; *Miles Gloriosus*, 31-32, Pyrgopolinices and Paelestrio, 31-32; *Persa*, 32, Dordalus, 32, Paegnium and Sophoclidisca, 33; *Rudens*, 32, High Priestess of Venus, 32
rhetoric: *blanditiae*, 21; feminine gender terms, 30-33; *mulier* as synonym for *meretrix*, 39; *mulier* and *homo* as rude address, 30
plebeians, on Aventine hill, 92; aristocracy involved in Bacchanalian Conspiracy, 98
Pliny the Elder, 88, 111
Pliny the Younger, 147-62, 163
archaisms, 148
boni, 148-49
career at bar, 148; Centumviral court, 150; Colleagues at bar: Lucceius Albinus, 152; Cornelius Tacitus, 149, 153, 160-61; courtroom etiquette, 151-52; defense of: Baetica, 151; Junius Bassus, 152; emulation of Cicero, accusations of, 151, 157; ethics, professional: Tuscilius Nominatus, 153-54; extortion cases: Caecilius Classicus and Norbanus Licinianus, 151; Junius Bassus, 152; Marius Priscus, 153; judges: Cornutus Tertullus, 153; opposing counsels: Claudius Restitutus, 152, 153; Pomponius Rufus, 152; Aquilius Regulus, 150-51, 156; Fronto Catius, 153
epistles, 147-48, 162; Cicero's letters, comparison with, 147-48
flattery, Pliny's susceptibility to, 147-48
foreigners, respectability of, 148
men: Asinius Bassus, 149; Asinius Rufus, 149; Claudius Aristion, *princeps Ephesorum*, 148; Cornelius Priscus, 156; Corellius, 159;Fadius Rufinus, 147; Julius Genitor, 159; Martial, Pliny's relationship with, 154-58; Minicius Fundanus, 149; Pomponius Mamillianus, 148; Sabinianus, 158; Trajan, 147; Salvius Liberalis, 153; Verginius Rufus, 158
freedmen, 158, C. Plinius C.l. Zosimus, 158, 162
patronage, literary, 154-58
places: Calpurnius Macer's country house, 158; Vicetia, 153-54
Pro Cluentio, Pliny's favourite speech, 153
provincial birth, 148
rhetoric: Ciceronian 150, 151; masculine epithets: *homo ingeniosus acutus acer*, 155, 157-58; *homo*: to degrade opponents, 151; *omnium bipedum nequissimus*, 151; Quinti- lian, study with, 148; *suasoriae* and *controversiae*, 148
writing of verse, 159
women: Arria and Fannia, 159-60; Aurelia, 150-51; Corellia, 159; the *feminae* of Misenum, 160-62; Verania, wife of Piso, 150; Ummidia Quadratilla, 160, 162; Domitii Tulli uxor, 161, n. 70
feminine *topoi*: *mulier* and rhetoric of victimization, 151
Plutarch: *Marius*, 55
Pompeia, Caesar's wife, 23
Pomeroy, S.B., 41, 84

Quintilian: the adulterous poisoner, 42, n. 36; fictitious characters and situations, introduction of 139; geminatio, 203, n. 7; tropes, 19; weakness of Cicero's case on behalf of Cluentius, 43, n. 41

regina meretrix, 88
Rutland, L.W., 81, 122-23
Ryberg, I.S., 135

Sallust, 47-62,
Catilinarian Conspiracy, 50, 56-59, 61, 62; Cato and Caesar, true heros of Conspiracy, 56
characterization, 58-59
factional politics, 47, 49, 55, 56, 59
The Histories, 59-60
historiography: Sallust and moral *exempla*, 50; Thucydidean tradition, 48, 50, 60
Jugurthine war, 47-56, 61
Mamilian Commission, 49
men:
Catilinarians: Sergius Catilina, 56-59; Curius, Q., 56-57, 107; Piso, 56; Umbrenus, 58; Volturcius, 58; consulars: Aemilius Lepidus, 59; Aemilius Scaurus, 48-49, 59; Caecilius Metellus, 49, 51-52; Calpurnius Bestia, 49, 51, 59; Ap. Claudius, 60; Scipio Aemilianus, 52; Scipio Africanus, 51; Fabius Maximus, 51; Iunius Silanus, 57, 58; Julius Caesar, 57-58; Licinius Crassus, 50; Marcius Phillipus, 60; Marius, 52, 53-55, his political persona, 54; use of rhetoric, 54-55; Opimius, 49, 59; Postumius Albinus, 51; Tullius Cicero, 57-58, as gossip monger, 50
non-Romans: Adherbal, 52; Bomilcar, 49; Gauda, 51; Hamilcar, 49; Hiempsal, 52; Jugurtha, 49, 51, 52; Masinissa, 52; Micipsa, 52, 60; Mithridates, 60; Nabdalsa, 49, 51

praetors, Valerius Flaccus and G. Pomptinus, 56, 58, Sallust's portrayal of them compared with Cicero's, 56
tribunes: Gracchus, C., 49; the Gracchi, 55; Licinius Macer, 60; Memmius, 55-56; called inferior orator by Cicero, 55; Porcius Cato, 57
places: Milvian Bridge, 56
rhetoric: bacchanalian, 56; Ciceronian, Sallust's avoidance of, 48; foreshadowing, 51; *huiuscemodi verba*, 58, 60; juxtaposition and innuendo, 50; Marius' pleonasms, 54; political vocabulary, perversion of 55; semantical change, 55, 59; Vatican manuscript, 54
catchwords: *adulescens*, 52; *ambitio*, 47, 53; *dominatio*, 47; *egentissumi*, 53; *factio*, 50; *opportunissumi*, 53; *pauci potentes*, 59, *potentia*, 50; *satellites*, 59-60; *virtus*, 47, 54
gender terms: contrast of *homo* and *vir*, 48-51, 58; *homo nobilis*, 48-50; *homines militares*, 58; *non dignos homines*, 59; *novus homo*, 49, 53; *patricius homo*, 58; Sallust's gender terms contrasted to Cicero's, 47, 59, 60; *sapiens vir*, 51; *turpissumi viri*, 54; *vir acer*, 51; 55
women, Corsa, *Ligus Mulier*, 61, 224, Fulvia, 61-62, *Galliae mulieres*, 61; Sempronia, 61, 62; *femina*, the nonexistance of, 60-61; *mulier*, 61-62, *mulier ancilla*, 61; rhetoric: bacchanalian, 62
Scobie, A., 191, 193, 194,
Scullard, H.H., 26-27
Seager, R., 112, 113
Seneca the Elder, the adulterous poisoner, 42, n. 36; criticism of Votienus Montanus' intellect, 120, n. 4; Sallust and the tradition of Thucydides, 48, n. 8
Shakespeare, W., 194-95
Sherwin-White, A.N., 147, 155, 160
Smethurst, S.E., 77, 87, 91
Suetonius, 105, 163-71; Christians, 168; foreigners, 167-68; freedmen, 165; gender terms, substitute for character delineation, 171; plebs, 164-65; Suetonius' rhetorical skill, 163
men: Augustus and the *asinarius*, 164; his edicts about games, 170-71; Claudius, his misspent youth, 165; on dice, 164, n. 9; Clodius, tribune of plebs, 165; Domitian, 170; Nero, 167, 168; Otho, 169; Telephus, *mulieris servus nomenculator*, 166-67; Tiberius, 169; Vitellius, 167-68
rhetoric: gender epithets: *e plebe homo*, 164-65; *ferox atque impotens mulier*, 168; *generosissima femina*, 169; *homo sordidae gulae*, 168 *probatissima nec ignobilis femina*, 168; *sordidissimi homines*, 165; *splendida femina*, 169
women: Augustus' edicts about, 170-71; Aemilia Lepida, 169; Agrippina, poisoner, 168-69; Alba Terentia, Otho's mother, 169; Calpurnia and Cleopatra, Claudius' *paelices*, 170, n. 32; *Chatta mulier*, 167, 169; Caligula's freedwoman, 165-66; *feminae*, searched by Claudius 171; Gemonian Stairs, 171; *ius IIII liberorum*, 170, n. 32; Livia, 167, 169; *mulier libertina*, 166; rapes by Nero, 168; *scorta* contrasted to *feminae*, 171
suicide, feminine, 82-83, 87, 116, 189; masculine, 186
Sulla, dictator, 60, 75, 103
Syme, R., 48, 51, 53, 56, 142

Tacitus, 85, 99, 120-43, 149, 153, 161, 163, 175, 188
Agricola, 120, Agricola's victory at *Mons Graupius*, 128
Annales, 120, Armenians, experiment with feminine rule, 132; hysteria of British warriors, 128-29; British rebellion, 131-32; *Germania*, 120, German behaviour on battlefield, 127-28, burial customs, 125, Germans as *exempla*, 121, 124-26, the Fenni, 126, Hercules, worship of, 127, the Sithones, ruled by woman, 132
characterization: characters, development of, 122, emperors as weak tyrants, 123; gender epithets as capsule characterizations, 122
Historiae, 120, 126-27, 132
Livy, evocations of, 121, 125-26, 133
men: Calgacus, 131; Claudius, 137-38; Civilis, Julius, 132; Nero, 135, 136, 140-41, 142; Octavius Sagitta, his murder of Pontia, 139; Otho, 140-41, 142; Piso, 141, 142; Sejanus, 123, 140; Suetonius Paulinus, 129; Tiberius, 123, 134-35; Valerius Asiaticus, 123; Votienus Montanus, 120, n. 4
rhetoric: neo-Ciceronian oratory, Tacitus rejection of, 121; bacchanalian rhetoric, 129, 134, n. 49; *privatus*, rhetoric of, 125; rhetoric, Tacitus training in, 135; *variatio* and antithesis, 135
Vocabulary: *domus et penates*

contrasted to *sedes et penates*, 125; *intercursantibus feminis*, 130; innuendo, 127, 136

women: Acte, 121, n. 7; Aemilia Lepida, 42, n. 36; Agrippina the Elder, 123, 132; Agrippina the Younger, 120, 133-134, 137-38, 141, her masculinity, 134, her erudition, 137, victim of Messalina, 137; Boudicca, 131-32; Calpurnia, 120; Cartimandua, 132; Claudia Pulchra, 42, n. 36; Claudia Sacrata, *mulier Ubiae*, 127; Epicharis, *libertina mulier*, 135-137; ambiguity in portrayal, 135-36; Erato, Queen of Armenia, 132; Junia Silana, 120, victim of Messalina, 137; Livia Augusta, 122, 123, 133; Livilla, 123; Locusta and Martina, 121, n. 7; Messalina, 120, 123, 134, 137; Numantina, 42, n. 33; Plancina, 123, 132-33; Pomponia Graecina, 121; Pontia, 138, 139, 141; Poppaea Sabina, 62, 138-42, evocations of Sallust, Cicero, and Petronius in her portrayal, 140, Satria Galla, 138, 141, 142; Veleda, 132

general: arena, alleged performance in, 121; barbarian women: battlefield, behaviour of German women contrasted to British, 127-28; foreign cults, charges of participation in, 121; German women as *exempla*, 124-26, their duty to mourn, 125, wife-husband relationship, 124-25; *lupanaria*, women's alleged performance in, 121; passivity as feminine ideal, 129

gender terms: *femina*, 122-130; *femina* equated with weakness, 125; *femina Ligus* as opposed to *Ligus mulier*, 126; *impotentia muliebris*, 123, 134; *muliebre et fanaticum agmen*, 129; *muliebris*, 122-23; *superbia muliebris*, 138

vocabulary: *amor* and *ira*, 141; *blandimenta*, 138, 141; *fletus*, *ploratus*, and *lacrimae* vs. *ululationes*, 128; *mutatio*, 138; *saepta pudicitia*, 126; *venerati/venerationem*, and Agrippina's *hubris*, 133; *vinclis exsoluti/vinclis absoluti*, metaphor of Agrippina's power, 133, witchcraft, terminology of, 141, n. 78

stereotypes: *amore uxoris incautus*, 141-42; blame of Julio-Claudian women, 122; crowds of women, 130; *femina* as *dux*, 117, 121-22, 131-34; *impudicitia* of Pontia, Poppaea, and Satria, 138-42; woman dominating weak tyrant, 123, 141; women's mourning, 125-26; women's tears, 128

Tanaquil, as model for Tacitus' Livia, 88

Tatum, J., 188, 193, 194

Terence, Phormio and Demipho, 39; use of *mulier* as substantive for *meretrix*, 39

Thucydides: gender terms, 48, n. 8; political vocabulary, perversion of, 55, 59, 74; tradition in Sallust, 48, 60; tradition in Livy, 63

tribunes of the plebs, 21-22, 65-66, 106-109, equated with prostitutes, 21; epithets: *caecus atque amens tribunus pl.* 21; *homo facinerosus*, 21; *perditus*, 21; *vir bonus et innocens.minime popularis*, 22; *homo maxime popularis*, 21

unus vir, 23, 69; *vir unus*, 73-74

Valerius Maximus, 100-101, n. 7

Velleius Paterculus, 100-119

historiography: Sallust and the Thucydidean tradition, 48, n. 8

Histories, epic scope of, 100, 119

men: Aelius Lamia, 102; Aemilius Lepidus, 104, 111; Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, 101; Agamemnon, 116; Antony, 111, 117; Appius Claudius, lover of Julia, 117; Augustus, 104-105, 111, 112, 114; Caesar, Julius, 115; Cato the Younger, 109-10, n. 40; Cicero, 101; Clodius, 104, 106-107; Codrus, 101, 105; Cornelius Scipio, lover of Julia, 117; Crassus Mucianus, 101; Curio, 104, 106-107, 108, 109; Drusus Claudius, 118; Fulvius Flaccus, 104; Gabinius, 110; Gracchus, C., 103, 104, 108; Gracchus, Ti., 103-04, 108, spelling of *praenomen*, 105; Hesiod, 101; Homer, 101; Iulus Antonius, lover of Julia, 117; Lollius, M., 104, 111, 114; Lucullus, 104; Lutatius Catulus, 110; Lycurgus, 101; Marcellus, 115; Maecenas, 102; Marius, 103; Maroboduus, 105-106; Minatius Magius, 102; Mithridates, 102, 105; Octavius, C., 102; Opimius, 104; Orestes, 116; Piso Frugi, 108; Pompey, 102-103, 110, 115; Pontius Telesinus, equal of Hannibal, 105; Quinctius Crispinus, lover of Julia, 117; Rutilius, P., 103; Scipio, lover of Julia, 118; Scipio Aemilianus, 102; Sempronius Gracchus, lover of Julia, 117; Segestes, 112; Sejanus, his sense of humor, 102;

Statius Murcus and Crispius Marcius, 102; Sulla, 103; Tiberius, 104-105, 106, 112, 113, 114, 119, moderation of, 105, 110; Varus, Quinctilius, 112-13
obituaries: 103
rhetoric: Velleius and, 100, 106; Ciceronian invective, 108, 111
vocabulary: *eloquens* as opposed to *disertus*, 107-108; *homo*, with non-pejoratives, 109; *homo ingeniossissimus*, 108; *modestia* and *verecundia*, 105, 110; *vir*, to magnify Roman victories, 105-106; *vir alioqui*, 103-104
women: 114-119, tangential position of women in V's history, 114-115; Annia, 115, Calpurnia, *Bestiae f.*, 116; Calpurnia, *Caesaris uxor*, 115; Cleopatra, responsible for Antony's bacchanalianism, 117; Clytemnestra, 116; Cornelia, *Cinnae f.*, 115; Cornelia, *Caesaris uxor*, 115; Cornelia, *Gracchorum mater*, 115; Electra, 116; Fulvia, *Semproniae f.*, 117; Helen, 115; Hermione, 115; Julia, *Augusti f.*, 117-18; Junia, *Bruti soror*, 115; Livia, 118-19, abduction by Augustus, 118; Lucilia, 114; Octavia, *Augusti soror*, 115, Scribonia, 118; Servilia 116
gender terms: *muliebris*, 116, 117; *virilis animi femina*, 117
general: masculinization of women, 116-117; suicide, 116
Vergil, 67, 69, 115.
vindex libertatis, 60, 66
vir alienus, 78, 85
Vretska, K., 50
Wallace-Hadrill, A., 163
Walsh, P.G., 63, 172, 179, 181, 182, 196
Webster, G., 128-29, 132
White, P., 154, 155
Wirzubski, C. 22
women, Apuleius, 188-96; Cicero, 29-46; Petronius, 175-84; Pliny the Younger, 150-151, 159-61; Suetonius, 165-66, 168-69, 170-171; Tacitus, 120-21, 122-30, 131-34, 135-42; Velleius, 114-18
female divination, 89
literary masculinisation of, 62, 87, 116, 117, 134
matronae, 93
mourning, 84, 125-26
state religion, subordinate status of women in, 89
suicide, 82-83, 87, 116, 189
rhetoric: word order, to indicate feminine guilt, 97
rhetorical stereotypes: adulteress-poisoner, 41, 41, n.36, 42, 43-44, 168-69, 192-93; crowds, 83-85, 90, 128, 180; fearful, 82, 85; *femina*, fighting, 85, 86, 127-28; *femina inermis*, 85-86; foreign, 86-89; *meretrix* and *adulescens*, 41, 91, 92, 93, 180, 181; bacchante or nocturnal cultist, 43, 43, n. 39, 89-93, 177, 178, 179-80; witches, 177, 188-94; women's tears, 83-85, 90, 128
rhetorical catchwords: *blanditiae*, 21, 83, 88, 89, 185; *blandimenta*, 138, 141; *impudicitia*, 138-42; *procurrere* and *discurrere*, 85, 90, 176; women who pursue *viros alienos*, 62, 78, 85, 177
Woodman, A.J., 5, 100, 106, 107

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